582 still cultivates his father's fields and eats at his father's home. In
241 former days, we were told, the marriage age of men was even
621 later than it is at present (*vide infra*, p. 80). 'Perhaps after twenty a boy would be betrothed, but to a young girl, and he would wait eight years before she grew up.'

857 From the time boys begin to herd they recognize one of their number as a leader. 'When we herd cows as boys', a friend told us, 'there is always one who is obeyed by his fellows whatever he says. No one chooses him, he gains his leadership and his prestige by bodily strength. For always, when we are boys together among the cows, we vie with one another and dispute about going to turn back straying cattle, or about fetching fire to cook the food we have brought with us. And so we start fighting, and we go on fighting until one of us beats all his fellows completely and so becomes the leader. And then it is he who sends others to turn back straying cattle, to fetch fire and to collect firewood. And he is greatly respected. He settles quarrels too. What we quarrel about most as boys is a particular insult: one says to another: "You are only a child, you are, I am your senior." This is always happening and then it is the part of the one who is leader to set those two on to fight. We all stand round and watch and the one who first cries is proved the child.'

622 Later, when the boys have built apart from their fathers, one of their number is often appointed by the headman of their fathers' village to settle disputes between them. Some boys' villages have no such appointed leader, but many of them do. Such appointments are, however, temporary. It is only when political authority is transferred to their generation that the young men's permanent leaders are chosen.

b. The 'coming out' ceremony

561 Eight or ten years after the young men of the senior boys'
622 village of the chiefdom have begun to marry, their fathers hand
over the government of the country to them. This transfer of
621 authority is effected in an elaborate ceremony called the 'coming
643 out' (*ubusoka*).

The 'coming out' is a series of legal acts by which the country of an old chief and his village headman (*amafumu*) is, with certain reservations, handed over into the possession and control of his

two senior sons and their respective village headmen. These legal 561
acts are accompanied by much pomp and ceremony. It is at once 622
the initiation of all the youth of the chiefdom into public life, the 621
constitution of two new political units and the proclamation of
two new chiefs. It consists not only of a series of legal acts but of 643
religious ritual as well, action being taken to increase the personal qualities appropriate in a chief and his village headmen by treatment with medicines.

The 'coming out' comprises six main events: firstly, the public recognition of a number of age-villages of young men, and the selection of headmen to lead them; secondly, the magical treatment of young chiefs and headmen to make them dignified and powerful; thirdly, the public recognition of the two young chiefs; fourthly, a cattle raid; fifthly, the establishment of the young age-villages on adequate land; and sixthly, the marriage of the young chiefs.

When the eldest sons of his contemporaries reach the age of about thirty-three to thirty-five years the old chief is approached by his village headmen who say: 'The sons have grown up, let us make the "coming out" for them.' After a period of delay, for he is unwilling to relinquish his own honour and power, the old chief agrees, and the 'coming out' takes place. He fears lest he may fall ill from 'the breath of men' should he delay too long (*vide infra*, p. 134). His two heirs, together with all the boys and young men, whether married or single, who are sons of the old chief's contemporaries, are summoned to attend, according to their age-villages, at the old chief's principal house. When they arrive they wait there for several days, while the old village headmen discuss with their chief where to give the young men land, and whom they will select as headmen of the young villages. In many of the young village groups there are already leaders previously appointed by the village headmen of their fathers. If they have proved satisfactory their appointments are confirmed by the old village headmen; if not new ones are selected.

In selecting leaders of the young men's villages the old head- 622
men look for men who are wealthy, who come from respected
families, who have ability in judging cases, and are popular with 157
their fellows; in the old days they looked also for courage and the ability to lead men in war. These qualities correspond to the village headman's functions. He should be hospitable to his

622 157 neighbours, he judges their cases; he is their leader at ceremonies and in the old days he led them to war also. He represents their desires to the chief, and it is through him, and in consultation with him, that the chief gives orders. Besides this each headman [754] (*ulifumu*) is believed to protect his own villagers from witchcraft, 'to watch over the country by night', to shield men and cattle from the spiritual forces of evil.[1] To fit them for this task, village headmen are treated with medicines at the 'coming out' to give them the power of seeing and fighting witches.

622 So important is this position of village headman that legal precautions are taken 'to prevent the village headman becoming a chief', as several informants have put it to us. It is illegal to choose a village headman from among the kinsmen of a chief, and it is illegal to elect the son of a village headman to that office in any age-village of his own contemporaries, though he may perhaps inherit the position in his father's village when his father dies.

622 621 To return to the 'coming out' ceremony: when the old men have made up their minds, one of them goes among the crowd of young men, and catches hold of those they have chosen in order of seniority: first the one who is to be leader of the senior village of the first son of the old chief, then the leader of the senior village of his second son, then the leader of the next senior village of the first son, and so on. There are commonly eight age-villages of young men; of these four will belong to the chiefdom of the first son, four to that of the second. The eight new village headmen are now publicly known, four in each new chiefdom.

622 789 •643. The young chiefs, together with the senior headman of each, are then treated with medicines that they may be impressive (*nsisya*). From birth a chief undergoes periodical treatment to make him impressive (*nsisya*) 'that we commoners may tremble before him'. The treatment at the 'coming out' is directed towards the same end: 'We treat him, then he will be altogether a chief, men will respect him!' The village headmen now drink the

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[192] [1] The essential meaning of a word in one culture is often illuminated by the meaning of a word from the same stem among neighbouring people. In this connection it is significant that *ifumu* in Bemba and *mfumu* in Nyanja mean 'chief', but in Ankole *abafumu* means 'magicians' (including diviners) (*African Political Systems*, p. 145), and among the Sukuma *bafumu* is used in the same sense (*Africa*, Vol. XIX, p. 14). cf. H. H. Johnston, *A Comparative Study of the Bantu and Semi-Bantu Languages*, Vol. II, p. 270.

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medicines of power for the first time, and these are thought to create or develop in them *amanga*, that is, the power of seeing and fighting witches (*vide infra*, pp. 96-102). To the senior headman of each young chief is handed a magic horn to attract people to the country. 'The horn is the luck of the chief that many people may come to build.' To each is given also a magic tail, which, it is believed, will enable him to dream of wars that are approaching and which, together with a magic spear, he carries into battle. 'The spear of the chieftainship is to fight battles with, it is manhood, strength.' The horn, the tail, and the spear are emblems of office handed on by the senior village headman of the old chief to the senior headmen of the young chiefs. They were treated periodically by a special doctor and a set was provided for each independent chiefdom at the coming out. The treatment of these emblems is now rarely undertaken—we were fortunate to see it once. The Nyakyusa say that since the country has been pacified, it has become unnecessary; its purpose was to secure success in war. 622 789 643

The next stage in the action is the one from which the whole institution takes its name: 'the coming out' (*ubusoka*). The two young chiefs are secluded for a few hours in the hut of the old chief's first wife, where they receive various forms of magical treatment, and when this is finished someone outside knocks at the door and cries 'Come out!' Then, to quote the words of a village headman who told us about his own 'coming out', 'The director of ceremonies said: "Get up!" The chiefs got up and came out (*basokile*)[1] of the house to us, and we, the crowd of young men, cried "Come on!" and welcomed them. Then we all ran shouting and calling the war cry towards the next chiefdom. In the old days we should have invaded that country to take cattle and to bring them back and eat them at the new huts which we build next. But that is finished now.' The senior headmen of the new chiefdom lead the charge, each grasping his war tail, his 622 643

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[1] cf. the traditional Nyakyusa greeting (now archaic) '*Sokile!*' literally meaning 'You have come out (of the house)' i.e. 'Good morning!' This greeting was not confined to those who had been through the *ubusoka* ceremony. [576]

A comparison of the meaning of the root in other Bantu languages is again suggestive. In Xhosa *ukusoka* means 'to install circumcised lads into manhood by giving them presents when they come out from their seclusion and are publicly acknowledged as men by the assembly of men' (Kropf, *A Kaffir English Dictionary*); *ubusoka* means bachelorhood, celibacy (of a circumcised man, not a boy). [192]

622 spear, and magic horn. In this way the new chiefs are shown to
•643 their people.

Chiefs who are to be independent now separate, each moving
622 off with his men to the place where the senior age-village of that
372 chiefdom will eventually be built. All fire in the country is extinguished,
even the fires in the homesteads of the old men, and
621 in each of the new independent chiefdoms new fire is made,
643 ceremonially, by the senior headman of the chiefdom and his
fellow next in rank. One holds a lion-bone while the other twirls
a medicated stick in a groove in the bone. The senior headman
and his second each gives fire to the village headman immediately
junior to him, and then the latter in turn to his immediate junior,
until each of the headmen has fire. At this point the future division
of each new chiefdom is foreshadowed, for the second senior
headman in each new chiefdom is recognized as the leader of one
side of the country. As each village headman lights his fire he
calls: 'Come men of such and such a village to me!' and they take
fire from him.

643 Since we are not primarily concerned with symbolism in this
book we shall not enter at length into the interpretation of these
372 events.[1] It must suffice to remind our readers of the Nyakyusa
773 myth that their chiefs came down from the Livingstone mountains
ten generations ago bringing fire with them, and that
they found the previous inhabitants of the valley, who became
their subjects, without fire, and eating their food raw. The extinguishing
of the old fires and lighting of new is interpreted by
the Nyakyusa as a symbol of the new chieftainship. A chief with
whom we were well acquainted explained it thus: 'The fire is the
fire of lordship (*umoto botwa*). The old chieftainship is coming to
an end, the new has come. They extinguish the fires in all the
homes, those of the young men and those of the old men, then
they make new fire which is taken to every home. For formerly
Mwangamilo [the old chief] would have had little power [after
the 'coming out'], Mwakyusa and Reubeni [his sons] would
have ruled.' But why fire? we asked. 'Because of old,' they relate,
we chiefs came with fire, the commoners had not yet got it, they
ate raw food only. When we came we slept in men's houses and
we made fire and cooked food. Men were astonished, and said:

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[1] A full analysis of the symbolism of one ritual necessitates a comparison of all the rituals of the society, which will be made in another book.

"Ha! what's this?" They were burned; so they said: "These are 643 ●
chiefs because they brought this fire." It is this they remember, 312
even to-day. . . .' And another informant explained: 'The fire 773
means (*kuhuti*) that a new chief has come, he brings fire, we throw away the old fire in the house.'

Having lighted their fires the young men cut bamboos and 342
build temporary shelters for themselves, making one or more 621
huts according to their numbers. It is forbidden for them to sleep in old huts, nor may they build on the site on which they lived as boys. Usually their first huts are on what was formerly pasture land, and later their fathers move aside to make room for the new generation. On the new site the two senior headmen of the new chief, together with a doctor, plant with magical ritual two branches of a *ficus* (known in Nyakyusa as *iliyabe*)—a species which is important economically since the bark of saplings provides the traditional dress of Nyakyusa women. These trees, known as *ulupando* and *umpandapanda*, are planted where the future boundary will run between the two halves of the young chief's country, and the senior headman (who is leader of the senior half of the country) builds his house near where the *ulupando* has been planted. He and his colleague, together with the doctor, proceed, after planting the trees, to set up the hearth-stones of his hut. Again magic is performed. Nyakyusa informants were not agreed as to the symbolism of these trees, as they were about the symbolism of the new fire. The root *ukupanda* means to plant a crop, or to set up, or establish the hearth-stones of a house; it is used also for establishing, or treating, with medicines. Some informants interpreted the *ulupando* as the chief and *umpandapanda* as his wife, saying: 'We are planting the chief and his wife.' Others said that the two trees represented the two senior headmen of the country, another that they represented the chief's two senior wives. What is certain is that *ulupando* is re- 621
garded as more important than *umpandapanda* and that both are 784
taboo. No one may cut the trees. If anyone breaks the taboo it is
believed that lions and leopards (closely associated with chiefs) 643
will roar at night, and treatment by a doctor will be necessary to still them. It is also widely believed that the strength of the chief is associated with the growth of the trees. 'If these trees go dry the reign will not be successful, the chief will be defeated in war. If they flourish and grow the reign will be successful, the chief is

621 a ruler.' It is relevant to add that cuttings of this tree strike easily
●643 in the soil and climate of Nyakyusa country. When a chief dies
754 he is buried beside his trees, and gradually a thicket—a sacred
[764] grove—forms round them.

The young men spend much time feasting and dancing. Formerly not only did they raid cattle for food from neighbouring chiefdoms, but they also took cattle, milk, and bananas from their fathers' villages. And they still do the latter, for they say: 'We are now the owners of the country.' The milk and bananas are often sent by the old chief, but 'if the chief is stingy, they teach him a lesson by going and *taking* bananas, saying: "We are important people."' Great emphasis is laid on this right of the young men to take food: one group, the mates of the first heir of a senior chief, boasted to us: 'We came out with grandeur, we ate many men's cattle.'

342 After a month or two the members of each new village move
621 off to build on a site of their own, and the wives of those
who are married join them. Wives do not come to the first temporary shelters. The senior of the new villages remains on the site of the temporary shelters where fire was made, the ritual trees planted, and the hearth-stones of the senior headman established with magic. Gradually each member builds himself a permanent hut.

621 The old men move aside to make room for their sons. If land
is short they may move on to the site on which a boys' village
561 formerly was, or there may be other land available. Whatever the position, adequate land must be provided for the young men's villages. And, we were told, 'We old men are glad to move, we are glad our sons are so many and we leave the land to them.' Or again: 'The old men move because new fire has come; the young men have made themselves into new people, hence they cannot build on their old sites but on new ones. Perhaps the old men will succeed them, for they may build in the boys' village where their sons were, or if there is space they go elsewhere. But the old men rejoice greatly, for their sons have "come out".' Nevertheless there are sometimes disputes between villages of different generations regarding a particular site (*vide* Document, p. 188).

643 A few months after the 'coming out' each of the two young
582 chiefs marries two wives. A young chief may be married already;
585 but the two whom he now takes *rank* as his great wives (*alaho*

abahalembe) and their eldest sons are his two heirs in the chieftainship. 643 Young girls, daughters of neighbouring chiefs, are 582 carried off with a show of force from their fathers' homes, by the 585 young chief's men, who themselves later contribute to the herd of cows sent to regularise the position. The two great wives are thus married not solely with the cows of their husband, but also with those of the men whose sons their sons will one day rule. The duty of arranging the match lies with the village headmen of [622] the old chief, and it is said that they are often guided in their choice by dreams.

The girls who are carried off are just about to reach puberty, 643 and they stay at the house of one of the men of the old chief until 583 their periods begin. When both have reached puberty they are 585 initiated, not at their fathers' houses, as are ordinary girls, but in the country of their husband, and both together. At their initia- 881 tion the old men and women of the country (contemporaries of the old retiring chief) play the part normally played by a girl's parents and their neighbours, while the young chief and his men take the usual part of a husband and his friends. And then, after the ceremonies are over, the two girls are given to the young chief as his wives. Houses are built for them separately, *i.e.* in the senior age-village of the new chiefdom for the first wife, in the next senior village for the second wife; and in this separation of dwelling place is already apparent the future division of the chiefdom between their sons.

Within the chiefdom, and among the wives and children of the 428 chief two 'sides' (*imbafu*) are recognized. Usually, in each coun- 616 try there are, at its beginning, at least two age-villages and half the wives of the chief on either side. This distinction of two sides is important in succession, a son from each side eventually inheriting half the country.

From the time of the 'coming out' of the two young chiefs till 643 the day of their own father's death there exists between him and 642 them a delicate balance of prestige and power. Each of the three, traditionally, has judicial authority in his own age-villages, but appeals in difficult cases may be taken from either of the young chiefs and their village headmen to the old chief and his village headmen, while the religious duties of chieftainship are exercised entirely by the old chief. But in the old days it was the young chief who fought and fed men. 'Young chiefs used to lead their

● 643 men to funerals in other countries and start a fight, and raid
cattle. The old chief would say: "I am too old to lead people to
642 war and to funerals, and to feed men, I have no cattle, you have
the power to do these things now." It was the lusty young men
(abatabwa) who fought, not the old men.'

Formerly this transition period rarely lasted long, for the old
643 chief usually died shortly after the 'coming out' of his sons.
Success in war and probably also the fertility of the country were believed to be dependent upon the virility of the chief. As one informant put it: "The old chiefs died because there was war: the people would complain of an old chief saying: "He is too old, when we fight we are beaten, he had better die. Perhaps the young chief will help us."' The old chief's death was commonly interpreted as due to 'the breath' (*vide infra*, p. 101) of his people who loved his sons rather than himself, but we have evidence that chiefs were sometimes ceremonially strangled by their village headmen. Nowadays many chiefs survive for years after the 'coming out' of their sons, and relations between the generations are consequently complicated, as we shall see later.

At the death of the old chief control of the villages of old men
643 passes to the two young chiefs and their village headmen, half to
622 each side. Village headmen of the old chief, relinquishing most of
their secular functions to their successors, enter upon new religious duties as priests in the sacrifices to the chief who has just died, and this priesthood they hand on to their sons. The dead chief's *full* brother is still the religious head of both chiefdoms, but all the secular functions are now exercised by the young chiefs, each in his own country. And the religious functions also fall to them when all their father's full brothers are dead.

The 'coming out' ceremony has been described in some detail, for it is the occasion when chiefdoms and villages are formally established, and the future relations between them are made clear. The splitting of the old chiefdom into two independent halves; the division of every new chiefdom into two sides, each under a senior headman; the boundaries, membership, and relations of the age-villages within each side—all are defined at this ceremony. In the catching-hold of the village headmen, and in the making of fire, the relative status of leaders and villages and the membership of each village are shown. In the planting of the ritual trees on the boundary between the two sides of the country, and

the establishment of the mother of an heir in each, the future 643
division of the country is foreshadowed. Finally, it is the occasion 622
on which power is formally handed over to the younger generation, and the success of the new headmen as war leaders is put to the test.

c. *Relations between villages within one chiefdom*

Within each chiefdom, then, there are two sides, each under a 631
senior headman. On each side are two or more age-villages of
contemporaries of the chief—men of the ruling generation. [illegible]
Attached to these villages are boys' villages made up of the 561
younger brothers and sons of contemporaries of the chief. They 621
live separately from their fathers and may have their own village leaders, but legally each boys' village is subject to the authority of the headman of its parent village. On each side there are also two or more villages of old men, contemporaries of the chief's father, whose headmen have ritual functions. Each village established at a 'coming out' ceremony has considerable autonomy under its own headman, but it is subject to the senior headman of the side it belongs to in two ways: cases not settled by a village headman go to the senior headman of the side, and a senior headman leads the villages of his side in war and communal hunts. Even villages of old men are subject to the authority of the senior headman of the ruling generation on the side of the country where they live. Boys and young men of the generation which had not yet 'come out' used to fight and hunt as village groups under the leadership of the senior headman (of their fathers' generation) on the side of the country to which they belonged. Whether or not each boys' village was also subject in war and chase, as in legal disputes, to the authority of the headman of its parent village is not clear. Certainly each boys' village formed a defined segment within any larger group.

To recapitulate, there are always villages of three generations 631
in existence—those of contemporaries of the late chief, the head- 561
men of which have ritual functions; those of mature men, contemporaries of the ruling chief, whose headmen have administra- 621
tive and military functions; and those of boys and young men, contemporaries of the heir, who have not yet 'come out', and who fight under the leadership of their fathers' senior headmen.

[631] Sometimes, as we shall see presently, villages of a fourth generation exist also.

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Each age-grade, or generation, covers a span of 30 to 35 years, and each village comprises an age-set with a span of 5 to 8 years, though this is longer in sub-chiefdoms (*vide infra*, p. 37). The average age of members in each grade varies with the date of the last 'coming out' ceremony. Just before the ceremony the elders with ritual functions are those over 65 or 70; the mature men of the ruling generation those between 35 and 65; and the 'boys' [illegible] between 10 and 35. Just after the ceremony the ruling generation consists of those between about 10 and 35, anyone over 35 being an elder. Those just too young to participate in one 'coming out' may be just too old to participate in the next. The village of Katumba in Mwaipopo's country was in this position: it had been created after the 'coming out' of the young chief Mwankuga, but informants were uncertain whether or not it would be established as a separate village at the 'coming out' of his heir Mwanyilu (*vide* Document, p. 183).

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The two senior headmen of a new chiefdom are chosen from the two senior villages established at a 'coming out' ceremony, so that a commoner's chance of holding high office is greatest when he is just a little older than a chief's heirs. The senior village of one generation begets the senior villages of the next (*vide* Document, pp. 181-3). Thus, though the son of a village headman in one generation cannot become a village headman in the succeeding generation, there is a tendency for leadership within the chiefdom to pass from *one group* of men to their sons. Those who participate in a 'coming out' while very young tend to have least authority in the country, and are superseded when still under forty by the generation of their sons. The immediate contemporaries of a chief, *i.e.* those with whom he lives during boyhood, have a special bond with him all through life; and it may sometimes happen that when a chief dies young and is replaced by a brother (his own son being too young to inherit) a junior village comes into prominence because its members have been 'the companions' of the new chief. Bulindanajo in Mwaipopo's country was a village of this kind: Mwaipopo I had died young, and was succeeded by his brother Mwaipopo II ('Mwambene') who had 'come out' as a youth in Bulindanajo; and his immediate contemporaries from that village maintained a special bond with him.

e. *Variation in the basic form of village organization*

The splitting of a chiefdom into two at the 'coming out', the division of each country into two sides, the establishment of two 621 age-villages of men in each half, and the development of two 643 boys' villages attached to each village of men: all this division and sub-division into two equal parts creates the basic form of Nyakyusa political organization. But there are frequent variations from it. Formerly, in large chiefdoms sometimes three or even four sons went through the 'coming-out' ceremony, each with his own village headmen, and each setting up an independent chiefdom. Very often, we were told, a chief would build a separate royal homestead (*ikitangalala*) for his favourite wife, and her son would 'come out' with his two senior brothers and inherit a small country subordinate to one of them. Again, the division of an old chief's country into two was not always accepted by the young men concerned; quarrels and fighting between them were common and the position established at the 'coming out' was sometimes modified by war. If one of the two decisively defeated the other, he took all his brother's cattle and reduced him to a subordinate position. The land of the Nyakyusa is full of such minor chiefdoms; by the clerks who collect tax they are described as 'villages', but they are radically different from villages in their constitution; for, while they often consist only of a few score families, they are themselves articulated into age-villages, and have at their head not an elected village headman (*ulifumu*) but a hereditary chief (*umalafyale*). A minor chief marries in the ordinary way, like a commoner, and only one of his sons inherits his chieftainship; while his chiefdom, owing to its small size, is often simply divided into two villages, one for the old, one for the young men.

There is no separate 'coming out' ceremony for a minor chiefdom but the heir goes through the ceremony with his superior, 643 remaining with him during and after the fire-making ceremony. His mates form one village under their own headman, who is subordinate to one of the two senior headmen of the new independent chief, taking fire from him. Great emphasis is laid on the fact that no separate fire, kindled by friction, is lighted for a subordinate chief.

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631 In the chiefdom of Mwaipopo, with which we were well acquainted, there are three such minor chiefdoms. In one no heir survived; but the heirs in the other two went through the 'coming out' ceremony with their superior chiefs, and the young men from each of the three formed a separate village, attached to one or other of Mwaipopo's two heirs. How many generations these subordinate chiefdoms survive as separate groups is not certain: the three in Mwaipopo's country were chiefdoms of his junior brothers which had lost their independence to him. In his case four brothers had 'come out' together, and the senior had conquered the others. Probably at the coming out of Mwaipopo's grandson these subordinate chiefdoms will appear only as villages, and no heir from them will be treated as a chief.

This formation of subordinate chiefdoms is a traditional variation of the standard pattern still going on. There are further modifications which are modern.

f. Modern modifications

● 643 177 In 1926, as has been noted, the British Administration created new 'Native Authorities'. The traditionally independent chiefs of the Nyakyusa were grouped together into eleven court districts,[1] and in each district a 'Native Court' was set up, consisting of the various chiefs and their village headmen, under the hereditary presidency of one of the chiefs, who thereby became senior to all the others in that Court district. Salaries for chiefs were introduced, the senior chiefs receiving far higher salaries than the others; the meetings of each Court are now always held in the territory of the senior chief (*umalafyale umbalondo*), and to this Court has been transferred a great deal of the legal business which, before 1926, was transacted by each chief sitting with his own village headman in his own chiefdom. The chiefs themselves were consulted in the selection of the Court presidents, and those chosen were normally the chiefs with the greatest number of men in each particular Court district.

The introduction of salaries has had a profound effect upon the relative status of the two young chiefs who 'come out' together. When an ordinary chief, with a small salary, dies, the Government recognizes the first son alone as chief and pays the whole

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[1] There are two other courts in Rungwe district for Ndali and Lambya.

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salary to him. This reduces the second son to the position of a minor chief as effectively as a defeat in war might have done in the old days. But, while the action of warfare only occasionally led to the subordination of one of the brothers, this action of the Government does so invariably, and always subordinates the younger brother. When a senior chief dies, on the other hand, the salary is usually divided; the bulk of it goes to the first son, together with the position of senior chief, while the second son is given the salary of an ordinary chief.

Nevertheless, whether the junior brother is to become a chief in receipt of a salary or not, he still goes through the 'coming out' ceremony with his brother, and is apportioned villages and headmen. Even in a country in which there are several minor chiefs there still is the division into two, some being regarded as subordinate to the senior heir, and the others to the junior. Division of a chiefdom into two at the 'coming out' is the basic form which is maintained, at least ceremonially, despite all modifications.

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The introduction of Courts and salaries has brought a new element into the relationship between the old chief and his heirs. Only one of them can receive the salary and they commonly dispute about it. Quarrels are particularly frequent over the position of senior chief, for the presidency of a Court carries with it a relatively large salary. Old senior chiefs cling to the position long after their sons have 'come out'. There is no compulsory superannuation of chiefs, and the traditional mechanism for getting rid of an old chief when his sons were ready to take over—strangulation by his councillors—no longer operates. The old headmen remain in power along with the old chief. Thus one effect of British Administration in Nyakyusa country has been to maintain the older generation in power much longer than was traditionally usual, and to delay the assumption of full responsibility for government by the younger generation..

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Another modern change which has far-reaching effects is the omission in some chiefdoms of the 'coming out' ceremony. When there is no 'coming out' the old men do not move aside to make room for their sons, and consequently the territorial demarcation between villages of old and young becomes blurred. Among the neighbouring people of Ngonde the 'coming out' ceremony has been dropped. There boys still build apart from their fathers, and the villages of young and old are more or

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less separate, but as time goes on the demarcation between them becomes less and less clear. In most chiefdoms of the Nyakyusa the ceremony is still observed, but in the country of Porokoto, near Rungwe mission, it has not been performed for a generation, and there the territorial separation between young and old is much less definite than in other chiefdoms. The maintenance of the age-village system is ultimately dependent upon the moving aside of the old men in each generation to make room for their sons.

The reason commonly given for the omission of the ceremony in Ngonde is that since the country has become more densely populated there is no longer room for two chiefs to divide the country of their father. The old system of division was adapted to an expanding population in a relatively empty country; and the two young chiefs ordinarily ruled a greater area, and more men, than their father. Further, it is said, the ritual was in one aspect a preparation for war, and fighting between chiefdoms has ceased. These explanations are obviously not adequate, since the ceremony is still performed in Nyakyusa chiefdoms in which there is neither room for expansion, nor war. Its omission may be related rather to the general abandoning of traditional rituals in Ngonde. Forty-five per cent of the people of Ngonde, including many leading men, are professing Christians, and there is a very general scepticism of the efficacy of traditional rituals. This scepticism extends even to those who are not Church members.

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In Porokoto's chiefdom the 'coming out' was omitted partly because of a dispute over the succession; but there, also, many of the traditional rituals are not regularly performed (as they are in other parts of Nyakyusa country), because the proportion of Christians is high since Porokoto's chiefdom adjoins the main Moravian mission station, Rungwe, and because pagan faith in these rituals has therefore been shaken. As Porokoto (who is not a professing Christian himself) put it, when explaining why he had not performed the twin ritual for his own twin daughters: 'We see that nothing happens to the Christians when they omit the rituals, so we begin to say "What value have they?"' Thus not only are Christians forbidden by their Churches to participate in the ritual acts of the 'coming out' but pagans themselves begin to doubt their necessity.

The presence of Christians further complicates the traditional

village organization since many of them live in separate Christian villages, or sections of villages. When the first German missionaries arrived among the Nyakyusa in 1891, they bought land from the chiefs and village headmen at the different points at which they decided to settle, and villages of Christian converts have grown up on this land. The nucleus of these villages consisted of Ngonde workmen who came from Karonga (where a Scots mission was already established) to help the Germans build their mission houses. Later, local Nyakyusa who came to work at the mission stations built there too, and a party of ninety slaves, rescued by the German administration from the Arab leader, Mlozi, were given into the care of the missionaries and settled on the land they had bought. These slaves were from other tribes, not Nyakyusa, and there was difficulty in repatriating them to their home villages. The foreigners and Nyakyusa who remained on mission land were those who accepted Christian teaching. Practically all the early converts were already working for the missionaries and living near them before their baptism, and later converts were encouraged to move out of their pagan villages and join the new villages of Christians on mission land. On the other hand, any who left the Church, or who were suspended for practising polygyny or for some other cause, were, and still are, liable to be turned off mission land by the missionary in charge. Thus these villages comprise only professing Christians. 643
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In the villages on mission land there is a certain division of authority between Church and State. Up to 1914 such villages were treated as being outside the control of any chief. A Nyakyusa informant described the position thus: "The missionaries said that they had bought their land and they would not admit any authority of the chief over it. They collected the taxes for the (German) Government themselves. The chief never sent into "European country" (*Kisungu*) for anything. The people there did not cook for him. The missionary used to be the chief in the European country, but since the English came it is different." Under the system of Indirect Rule the administrative authority of chiefs over Africans living on mission-owned land is recognized; taxes are paid through the chief, and civil cases between Christians may be taken to the chief's court (*vide infra*, p. 158). But chiefs still treat Christians living on mission land rather differently from those living on land which has not been so allocated. They 797
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V. THE CHIEF MWAIPOPO

[facing p.50]

627 both parties, or if he declares the case too difficult and refuses to give an opinion, then it is taken to the headman of the village. Should the headman fail to settle the dispute, it goes to the senior headman of his side of the chiefdom, thence to the chief sitting with his headmen, and nowadays it may go on through the Native Court, and the Native Appeal Court, to the District Officer sitting with native assessors, the Provincial Commissioner, and the High Court of Tanganyika.

643 ● 622 627 Village headmen neither have, nor had, power to enforce their decisions; such power lay with the chief alone in the old days—he would send some of his junior kinsmen and men from his capital (*ikitangalala*) to execute judgement—and he alone could order the parties to a dispute to drink the poison ordeal, from which verdict there was no appeal. Nor is a village headman or other arbitrator paid a fee—a pot of beer or a hoe from the plaintiff to 'open the case', and beer (or occasionally a bull) as a thank-offering from the party for whom judgement was given, were the perquisites of a chief alone. The arbitrator's reward is prestige—the honour and respect of his fellows. As we have said, a case may be submitted to anyone for arbitration and no slight to the existing authorities is thereby implied; but if cases are constantly taken to some individual in the section other than himself, a section leader may grow jealous. We heard of one who was reputed to have tried to poison a new-comer to his section, a Christian, who was hospitable and became so popular as an arbitrator that the appointed leader feared lest he might lose all his authority. The hospitable man is respected and his fellows often ask for his opinion on a case as they sit together over a pot of beer.

622 627 But though village headmen cannot enforce their decisions, they are not to be ignored. An individual does not take a case direct to the chief; usually his village headman takes it to the senior headman of the side,[1] and the latter then takes it to the chief. Both will have heard something of the case and, if it is not regarded as 'too difficult', will have attempted to reconcile the

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[1] It appears that a village headman *should* proceed through the senior headman of his side, but in Porokoto's chiefdom procedure was modified by the fact that there had been no 'coming out' ceremony. There Mwafula, the headman of a junior village, brought cases direct to the chief (*vide infra*, p. 148). It was modified also in Mwaipopo's country by the absence of Mwaqusamba, one of his two senior headmen (cf. Document, p. 181).

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[p. 18]

1. VILLAGES IN MWAIPOPO'S CHIEFDOM (1938)

Information from numerous informants

Generation	Chief	Sub Chief	Senior Headman	Headman	Village	Category	Legal Authority	Remarks
I[1]	*Mwaijonga*[2]		Njobakosa		IPENDA	Senior village of Mwaijonga		Village survives only ritually—there is no group of men living together as Ipenda. Njobakosa is senior priest of Mwaijonga and eats sacred meat of cow sacrificed in Mwaijonga's grove
				Kisegete	Isiki			Not surviving
			Ngulyo (inherited from his father, Mwakilibingwa)		ITEBE	Second senior[3] village of Mwaijonga	Ngulyo settles disputes but is subject to senior headman of next generation, Mwasomola (below)	Village survives with 11 members (original or their heirs). Ngulyo is a priest of Mwaijonga and eats the sacred meat in Mwaijonga's grove
				Mwaisumo ('Mwakyusa')[4] inherited	Bukoba			Not surviving
				Mwakilibingwa ('Kasitoro')	Ikumba			Not surviving
II	*Mwaipopo I* (son of Mwaijonga)		Mwasomola ('Mwangoma') inherited from his father		BUJEGE	Senior village of Mwaipopo. Born of Ipenda and Isiki	Mwasomola. Mwangupuga settles disputes during Mwasomola's absence, and subject to him	'Coming out' of Mwaipopo I and his brothers was in this village. Mwasomola at present living in another chiefdom but returns for ceremonies and to hear cases

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[1] The names of villages of Mwakagile, father of Mwaijonga, have perished; the names of Ipenda and Isiki will be forgotten when Mwaipopo (generation II) dies.
[2] Italics indicate that the person named is dead.
[3] Informants were not all agreed about the relative status of villages and headmen of Mwaijonga's time.
[4] Most individuals are known by more than one name—we include two when two were in common use.

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VILLAGES IN MWAIPOPO'S CHIEFDOM (1938)—contd.

Generation	Chief	Sub Chief	Senior Headman	Headman	Village	Category	Legal Authority	Remarks
II	Mwaipopo II (younger brother and heir of Mwaipopo I (See Plate V)			Katotile ('Mwakalembo') inherited	Bujenga[1]		Katotile	Kikuku who buried Mwankuga I lives here
					Lupaso[2]	Older section of Bujenga	No separate leader	Consists of 10 men who moved at 'coming out' of Mwankuga from Bujenga. The older men moved, leaving their younger contemporaries (Kikuku, etc.) in Bujenga. Katotile lives here, also Kasitile, the rain-maker. Strictly a section of Bujenga
					Busikali	'Younger brothers of Mwaipopo who eat with him', i.e. are of his generation	Mwainyobolela (Tandale) settles disputes	Tandale buried Mwaipopo I
						'Offshoot of Bujenga'		Not established as a separate village at 'coming out' of Mwaipopo. Is strictly a section of Bujenga
	"			Mwasota	Bulindanajo	Much younger than men of Bujege and Bujenga and Kyemo	Mwasota	Mwaipopo II originally lived here. There was once a battle between Bulindanajo and Bujege (*vide* p. 150).
		Likoeyula		Mwakikalo	Kibonde		Mwakikalo	

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[1] Besides having direct authority over his own village, each senior headman has authority over other villages established at the 'coming out' with their own headmen (see p. 31). The villages subordinate to each senior headman are listed in column 6 immediately under his own village.

[2] Lupaso is territorially separate, and spoken of as a separate village, but structurally it is really a section of Bujenga. Other villages of this type are underlined thus——

[p.183]

VILLAGES IN MWAIPOPO'S CHIEFDOM (1938)—contd.

Generation	Chief	Sub Chief	Senior Headman	Headman	Village	Category	Legal Authority	Remarks
II	Mwaipopo II		*Mwaikofu* Mwakwese ('Mwaisumo') inherited from Mwaikofu		LUPANDO	Second senior village of Mwaipopo. Sons of Bukeba	Mwakwese	Old men have moved to one side. Lupando was originally established as two villages but when the headman of the senior (Mwaikofu) died, the villages coalesced under Mwakwese
				Kanyeka ('Mwasibata')	Kyemo	Younger brothers of Lupando	Kanyeka	Very, very small. Old men have moved to one side
					Kisyelo			
		Mwakabole		Mwangoba	Kitole			Mwakabole 'came out' here
		Mwakipesile		*Mwakitwange* (*'Kasele'*)	Kabula			
III	*Mwankuga I* (son of Mwaipopo I)		Mwambuputa ('Mwafungo')		IGEMBE	Senior village of Mwankuga. Sons of Mbujege	Mwambuputa	Mwankuga I 'came out' here. 'Mwambuputa is the greatest (headman) in the country.' Was driven out and later fetched back
	Mwankuga II (younger brother and heir of Mwankuga I)				Katumba	'Younger brothers and a few sons of Igembe.' Mwambuputa's own son built here	Mwambuputa (no separate leader appointed)	53 men. Established *after* the coming out of Mwankuga I. Strictly a section of Igembe. 'Betwixt and between' generations III and IV. Some near contemporaries in Mpuguso
				Nsusa	Lugombo		Nsusa	Nsusa was driven out, later fetched back. Acted for Mwambuputa in his absence. Lugombo has a small sub-division, Itiki.
				Kabolile ('Mwaseba')	Ipoma	Younger than men of Igembe. Sons of Bujenga and Busikali	Kabolile	20 members. Took over land from Bujenga. They 'came out' when very young men. Includes a Christian section under Akimu

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VILLAGES IN MWAIPOPO'S CHIEFDOM (1936)—contd.

Generation	Chief	Sub Chief	Senior Headman	Headman	Village	Category	Legal Authority	Remarks
III	**Mwankuga II**				Ndongoti	Younger brothers of Ipoma	Kabulile. Mwakifilingwa (appointed by Kabulile) settles small disputes	29 members 27 married. One informant suggested that Ndogoti might be established as a village of the next generation at the 'coming out' of Mwanyilo. Others regard it as of generation III and strictly a section of Ipoma. Its members include junior sons of Mwaipopo II
					Kilwa		Kabulile (no separate leader appointed)	At present a section of Ipoma. May possibly be established as a village of generation IV
				Mwakileka	Kibonde (junior section)	Sons of Kibonde	Mwangalaba tries small cases. Others to Mwambupola	
		Mwaseba	Kakuju		NJERI	Second senior village of Mwankuga. Sons of Lupando	Kakuju	
				Mwakatika ('Mwanerpe')	Mpenga	Younger sons of Lupando	Mwakatika	
				Mwakalombe ('Mwaitebela')	Inuba	Youngest sons of Lupando	Mwakalombe	Mwakalombe had moved on account of a quarrel. He was recently brought home
		Mwakibwele		*Mwambegeja*	Lukwebo	Sons of Kitole		
		Mwakipesile		*Kasile*	Ndobo	Sons of Kabole		

[p.185]

VILLAGES IN MWAIPOPO'S CHIEFDOM (1935)—contd.

Generation	Chief	Sub Chief	Senior Headmen	Headmen	Village	Category	Legal Authority	Remarks
IV	Mwanjila (about 19 years old)		"	None yet appointed as Mwanjila has not yet come out	Mpuguso	Sons of Igembe	Mwankenja	'Mwanjila will come out here'
"				"	Ilunga	Younger sons of Igembe and Lugembe	Mwankenja	'Mwanjila will build here first'
				"	Ilinga	Sons of Njesi and Mpunga	Small cases to Mwakalile. Serious cases to Kabuje	Some members are married
				"	Lyuma	Younger brothers of Ilinga	"	None yet married
				"	Kuugwa	"	"	None yet married
				"	Isaka (junior section)	Sons of Isaka		

Thirteen independent villages established at the 'coming out' ceremonies of Mwaipopo, Mwakyusa and Mwankenja survive.
There are five village sections treated in some respects as practically independent villages. There are other village divisions as Ikili which are not so independent.
There are six 'boys' villages, not yet established, but likely to be recognized at the 'coming out' of Mwanjila.
The dividing line between village and village section is difficult to determine when villages have split, after the 'coming out' at which they have been established, as did Nyange. Our recognition of Ikubwe as a separate village and not Ikili is somewhat arbitrary.

It is to be noted that villages not only sub-divide but occasionally coalesce. Two independent villages established at the 'coming out' of Mwaipopo coalesced as Lupando, after the death of the headmen of one of them.
The traditional organization is modified in that Mwaipopo's country has not been divided or sub-divided into independent chiefdoms.

1: Wilson E-5 (1934-1938) 1951 [FN17 Ngonde [FN17
Nyakyusa

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6. THE 'COMING OUT' (*UBUSOKA*)

Mwaikambo (clerk and son of a chief).[1]

621 622 643 "The village headmen begin to talk among themselves, saying: "Our sons have grown up, should we not establish them?" So they go to tell the chief, saying: "Our sons have grown up, let us show them to the country." Two chiefs always "come out". We call them the senior and the junior. It is an old custom which is still followed that two chiefs should "come out".

[769] "So the village headmen seek a doctor to make them a medicine horn and treat the tails of chieftainship with medicine. The village headmen take counsel together and choose two senior headmen to "come out" with the chiefs. These senior headmen drink medicine (*amalondanyo*) with the chiefs.

"When many people, together with the two young chiefs, have come together the doctor gives powdered medicine (*amalondanyo*) to the chiefs and the senior headman chosen for each chief. They give a spear of chieftainship, and a horn, and tail to each of the men chosen as senior headmen—one for each chief. Each senior headman then binds the horn to the blade of the spear, and standing with his own chief and many men and women, raises the spear to the sky. The women trill [535] and each party goes to its place of "coming out" on the pasturage. Each chief, with his followers, goes to his own place. The men dance; sometimes they have drums, sometimes not.

[573] "Then when each party has reached it own place they make fire with fire sticks. The chief just simulates the action of fire-making then his senior headman takes the sticks and makes fire by friction. When they have built the shelters for sleeping in they warm themselves at the fire they have made; they *do not* take fire from the houses of men. If there are many of them then there will be three or four shelters, if few, then only one shelter. The men and their chief who has "come out" sleep in these shelters and enjoy themselves together (*ukukumanagala*). The first day they kill two head of cattle. Also they plant "the tree of coming out" (*umpiki gwa busoka*) which is called [illegible]. They plant it with a man who has come out previously, a man of their fathers' generation, he begins to plant, then he explains to them what to do, saying "plant", then the new senior headman plants it.

"While they sleep in these shelters with their cattle, they eat food which they take from their fathers, bananas, and milk, and other food,

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[1] For a note on [illegible] informants see p. vi.

From time to time their father, the chief, gives them a bull to kill. During the "coming out" food is very plentiful. If people pass on the road they honour them and give them food, and make love to them that they may build there. They remain in their shelters, they do not go about much. If the chief is stingy they teach him a lesson by taking bananas; they say: "Know that we are important people, we are those who have 'come out' and we are your parents." Later on they play drums—I think only in recent years. And the village headmen seize a woman, the daughter of a commoner, as a wife for the chief.

"The horn is the luck of the chiefs, that many people may come to build. Binding the horn to the blade of the spear is to show that the chief is one who has "come out" (*asumile*); it is as if he were carried aloft (i.e. "chaired")[1]. We show his greatness ("seniority") to people, then we will. (643) 778

"The fire made with fire sticks is to symbolize the new chieftainship. We do not take the old fire of the old men. 643 [572]

"The medicine is to make the chief heavy (*asito*), that it may be apparent that he is a chief. [764]

"The *akapanda* tree is a memorial of the "coming out", that men may come and say: "So and so planted this tree when he came out." Some say it is to show the power (*amaha*) of the chief, because if it does not grow it is said that his chieftainship will perhaps not flourish; then they will say: "Let us move and plant elsewhere." It is said that the spear of chieftainship is to fight battles; it is strength, manhood; it is treated with medicines.

"The tails are those with which battles are fought. When men go to war the senior headman grasps the tail. If the tail does not lead them well they return from the fight. It, also, they treat with medicines.' [778]

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[1] A bride at a puberty-marriage ritual is carried aloft shoulder high.

cry out, because then the teeth will disappear altogether, but to be silent, then they will reappear. 754

'And another activity of the witches is to take sickness from one country and cast it on some home they choose. So when people die they say this sickness was brought by the witches to so and so.'

Mwandesi (a very old man famous as a historian).

'The witches are always naked when they go to choke a person in dreams. A witch leaves his skin (ngwale) on his sleeping-mat and goes naked. When his neighbours, "the defenders" (*abamanga*), see him they may snatch his skin; then when he returns he trembles and sits down naked, ugly-looking. He looks as if he had a curse on him. But after a little while he gets another skin.'

Mwaisumo (clerk).

'The man of whom we have spoken twice (vide pp. 124, 252) is sometimes said to be a witch, he throttles the cattle of the village and men say that he throttles them also. But he is especially notorious for throttling the cattle of the village so that their milk disappears. Once they caught him for witchcraft, saying: "You are throttling us" and they drove him away. He moved to another village but in the same chiefdom, and there also men continually said: "We do not sleep on account of our fellow! If he brings witchcraft to us here he will die, we shall hit him with fists" (meaning that "the defenders" will hit him with fists) when he goes out to throttle his victims. If their cows dry up they say: "We shall hit his python, he will die." For it is said that if a person has a python which throttles the milk, men strike the python and he dies. The python means the witchcraft of throttling cattle or food. Saying "We shall strike his python and he will die" means that we shall strike him when he is throttling our cows and he will die.'

Ndalosangwa (pagan man).

'When the chief is good the cows are many and there is much milk. 754
And when the village headman is good, when he forbids witches to 643
come into his village, milk is plentiful. When we say a chief is good 622
(unnono) it means that he never goes to throttle cows, or if we say that the village headman is good it means that he does not go throttling. Formerly chiefs and village headmen were good. If they were great witches, no one came to them. I come from Penja country over there.

754 Mwalukasa was good. We knew he was good because people came to him and cattle increased and people loved him. Some who are quarrelsome lose all their men and are left alone. . . . A village headman or

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622 chief *gwa ifugo* is one who always preaches to his fellows that "food should be plentiful among us here, friends; none should bewitch others." "A man of plenty" (*ugwa ifugo*) is a village headman or chief who is angry at witchcraft in his village, and forbids it, who allows no one there who is "clever". The cunning of a witch, of one who has the bowel of witchcraft, is to go around throttling cows and eating people. When they go to throttle they go on high, they fly, they go like the wind. If they went on earth they would be killed by "the defenders". It is said that they eat the meat (flesh) of people, truly they eat it. When they go to "eat" a man, they spear him; they take his meat and eat it. A man does not recover when they have taken his meat; he dies. Those whom they have only speared and whose flesh they have not taken, recover. They roast this human meat and then they eat it; in this their cleverness lies. When they go to "eat" a man and have speared him and taken some of his flesh, they do not roast it at his place, they go to their homes, and there they roast it.'

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763 is forgotten he will be angry: 'It happens sometimes that a kinsman comes in later, after the man is buried, and is very angry because no message was sent to him; he comes in a passion, and perhaps he beats his brother [the one who should have sent him a message]. Then the others catch hold of him and say: "Why do you not come soberly and greet us decently with the appropriate words? Come now, why?" And if he does not stop they beat him.'

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764 These kinsmen and affines, with their wives and children, are under obligation to come to the burial, unless they are sick. Young children under the age of 10 or 11 are not obliged to come, though they often do, but older children must do so. One reason for the continuance of the burial ceremonies for three or four days is that this gives time for relations from a distance to receive the message and come. Deliberately to refuse to send a message or, on the [578] other side, to refuse to come to a burial for no good reason, is a symbolic breaking of the bond of kinship and no one ever does either, unless there is a serious quarrel and all economic and social relations are being broken off between the two families concerned.

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577 The village neighbours also are obliged to come to every burial in the village. They normally wish to do so, but, even if they do not, they still come for shame or for fear of being accused of witchcraft if they stay away. Where there is friendship the neighbours come in grief and sympathy and quarrels are softened by the fact of death, but, if the memory of enmity still persists, then the last sanctions are shame and fear: 'Some people mourn more than others.' 'The men who knew him say: "Let us go and mourn him." ' 'Those who did not know him intimately mourn because each thinks: "He has died, my neighbour, and so will it be with me one day." ' 'If I have quarrelled with my neighbour and he dies, I go to his burial for I say to myself: "It is true that while he lived we quarrelled, but now he is dead and we shall never meet again. I too will go to his burial and mourn him." ' 'If a village neighbour does not come to a burial we say he is unkindly and unsociable.' 'And if a man does not go to his neighbour's burial then at once people say: "It was you who bewitched him. Why else do you not come to bury him?" ' Several of the accusations of witchcraft recorded had been occasioned by a man's absence from a village neighbour's funeral. For it is believed that witches are chary of going to the burials of their victims lest the dead should rise and denounce them.

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764 A chief normally goes to all burials in his own country, except

those of very young children. 'He goes because it is his subject who has died; he is like the senior kinsman of the whole country, he rules all.' 'If a chief omits to go to a burial people say nothing, they know that he is always going to burials and they think that perhaps he has some urgent business. But if he constantly misses burials then people say that he has no affection for his people, that he does not come to bury them as is fit; and if a chief hears them saying this then he is ashamed.' Sometimes a chief who is busy will send a son to represent him. And he sends the drums to beat the lament. 'The drum is the chief . . . they cannot beat the drum before the chief has spoken.' 673 764

Besides the chief, the villagers, the relations, and the drummers, there come also personal friends of the dead man from other villages and chiefdoms. And beyond all these there often come others who are attracted not so much by grief and sympathy, nor even by the obligation to express these feelings, but rather by the dancing, the crowds and the possibility of getting some meat to eat. Not all those who come stay the whole three or four days, while the relations who live at a distance often do not arrive until the second or third day. 764 572 571

The Nyakyusa believe that in order to protect the living and avenge the dead it is most important to discover the cause of death. To do this they summon a doctor to perform an autopsy,[1] an operation fearful and repugnant, but felt to be necessary. The symptoms are interpreted in terms of witchcraft or sorcery, or other supposed causes of disease. 763

On the first, or early on the second, day after death, the burial takes place. The grave is dug in the swept and beaten earth that immediately surrounds the hut. The first spit of earth is always turned by the eldest son of the one who has died. At one burial we saw the young eldest son of a dead man being helped to do this. He was too small to manage a hoe by himself so he caught the handle near the blade while an older relative held it behind to steady it for him. The digging after the first spit is done by a skilled grave-digger, who may be a kinsman or not, with the help of others. The grave is ten or more feet deep with a cave at the bottom to one side. Some graves are oblong, some round or oval, 764

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[1] This is certainly traditional, cf. D. Kerr-Cross, 'Crater Lakes North of Lake Nyasa', The Geographical Journal, V (1895), p. 116. The custom is also reported for the Nyamwanga. For a description of the autopsy, cf. Monica Wilson, Good Company, pp. 243-50. [173]

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768 the killing has a legal implication, for the death of a man involves the transfer of his wives and property to another. If the inheritance is quite clear and disputes are unlikely, then a 'father' of the dead man tells the heir to kill the burial cattle. All the people present see him do this and know that he is the heir. And if the inheritance is, after all, denied him later, then the fact that he killed the cattle at his brother's (or father's) funeral gives him a strong *prima facie* claim to its recovery in the courts. If the inheritance is doubtful then a 'father' of the dead man kills the cattle. It is known that he himself cannot inherit and his killing of the cattle is an assertion of his authority to decide who shall do so.

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764 When a man of the chief's lineage dies, a live cow is buried with him and the more general custom of taking a cow or bull to look into the grave is interpreted as being 'like burying the cow'. The cattle used in this way must be of the lineage stock and are reserved for sacrifice.

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775 All the cattle killed are thought to go with the shade to the land of the dead (*[illegible]*) and it is believed that if he goes without any cattle he may be rejected by his kinsmen there. Tales are told of meeting dead men in the bush with their cattle which were killed for them. A cloth is a substitute for a cow and cloths which are buried likewise go with the dead. 'We will meet in the land of the shades and he will be wearing these cloths.' At one burial we saw, the dead man had left no cows of his own but his brothers killed two cows for him, three beasts were brought by affines, and sixteen cloths were brought by kinsmen, affines, and friends. 'Why', we asked, 'do you spend so much wealth at death?' 'Because, we say, as the owner has died let him take his wealth with him to the place of the shades. If he dies in lonely poverty he goes with nothing.' At another burial two beasts were brought by kinsmen, six by affines and one by a friend. There were thirty-two cloths, fifteen brought by kinsmen, twelve by affines, and five by friends. 'The bringing of cloths is to express sympathy (*[illegible]*) we tear strips of them with the company and some we leave over, which we bind on as mourning belts (*[illegible]*). Of old, people brought the cloth the fathers wove, and brass body-rings. It means: "May our fellow go with them; may he swagger with them—with the cloth and body-rings (*[illegible]*)." And we pour out food that he may take it with him.'

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[31] During the course of the war-dance (described below) the young

2: Wilson K-3 (1934-1938)1957 FN17 Ngonde FN17
Nyakyusa
Selya,MaNgonde

763 [764] [845] It is forbidden for the heir to lie with the dead man's wives before the ritual is over. But at the time of the beer, when the drinking is finished, we put him into the house and he lies with them. If he has lain with them previously the semen refuses to come. . . . But if all goes well the officiants raise the cry of triumph (*ukulala*) and shake a winnowing basket of seeds by the door and cry: 'Oum, oum, we marvel at the thing, we marvel at the thing (*ifiwa, ifiwa, tuswigile ikindu*).' If he fails they go to divine and the diviner says: '*Mbasi* (sickness from the shades), he has forestalled the ritual (*akindile ubupego*).' Then they pray in the bananas. He must have intercourse with all the women he is inheriting; yes, however old they may be, he must lie with them that night or else they will lose their strength of body or mind, or else their legs will swell. With the old ones he will never lie again! He drinks [837] fresh milk to give him strength beforehand! Fresh milk gives strength, it produces semen.

The next morning each of the wives goes off to her father with [illegible] and with meat; the fire is buried in the bananas, it goes to the place of the shades, the meat is eaten. And the man too goes with his [illegible] to his own father. Each wife makes her [illegible] by wiping her eyes and her husband's genitals with her hands and then taking cooked bananas in them. He himself does likewise at the end.

768 773 The [illegible] goes to the place of the shades, it is to drive away the shade of the dead man; before this he had not reached the place of shades but was on the way. In this manner we tell the shade that we have put another in his place, we tell him to go and join the other shades now and to come back with them to warm themselves by the fire in his old house.

● [846] QUESTION: How can a chief who inherits many wives lie with them all in one night?

843 768 833 KASITILE: I do not know how. Kyala gives him strength! . . . He has intercourse with them all. Yes, really this does happen. . . . But if the man is old and fails to lie with them all, perhaps the wives will conceal the fact. He lies on one side of a partition wall with his wives and the people (for many come to sleep in his house that night) on the other. Then if he fails altogether . . . no one beats the partition with a stick, they all stay quiet till morning; but if he succeeds at first, and fails at the last few, they may perhaps conceal it. One of the wives is told by the officiant to beat the partition with a stick when he has lain with all his wives. When she does this the officiants who are in the doorway shake up beans and millet and pumpkin-seeds in a winnowing basket and call out: 'Oum, oum! We marvel at the thing!' If he fails altogether they stay quiet and next day go to divine; the diviner says: '*Mbasi*.' Then they pray and pray, and praise all the shades of old, and that night he tries again and the semen comes.

777 768 853 The seeds of beans, millet and pumpkins are symbols of the shades, the

[[i.e. the parent to the dead. — Ibid q.v.]

the groom's mothers began to dance again. They approached the group of girls and the groom's own mother took the mat off the kneeling bride and spread a large scarlet cloth over her. Then she lifted her on to her shoulders and danced with her. The two parties coalesced and danced together, singing the ritual song *Tulalalela alela* (We sing a dirge). Everyone was smiling and joyful despite the song. By 3.40 the dancing was over and a large mat was spread for the 'mothers-in-law' to sit down in the shade. The bride knelt again with bent head covered by her mat and surrounded by her maids. 881 584

At this point Mwailesjo, her father, began scolding angrily because the groom's party had not brought a bull. 'Always when people come to marry my daughters they bring a bull, always. It looks as if the girl had been to visit her husband and you had found fault with her and did not like her.' The groom's mothers replied: 'We are poor.'

Mwailesjo: 'How can you say you are poor? You can find the marriage-cattle, you say. Why didn't you bring some of them? Then I would have killed one to eat now. See, I have killed a bull already. If I had known that you were not going to bring one I'd have killed another.'

The groom's mothers sat with downcast heads. For a commoner's daughter bananas and milk are adequate for the *ukwingisia* feast, but a chief has the right to expect a bull. [illegible] [illegible] 643 ●

Presently the groom's own mother and one of her companions entered Kyobwe's hut to roast bananas and grind some of the bark of a tree they had brought for medicine. The powder was put into a small calabash with water. The bride knelt in the doorway of Kyobwe's hut and, as her mother-in-law poured out the medicated water, she washed her hands and wrists and mouth in it. The bride's half-brother, a lad of 15 or 16 years, was washed also, standing by the doorway of Kyobwe's hut, though he was most reluctant to co-operate. He kept looking towards his elder brother Lazarus, a Christian, and did not submit until Lazarus said: 'All right, go ahead!' Kyobwe, seeing his reluctance, said: 'You need not wash if you don't wish to, it doesn't matter. Perhaps we'll leave it out as it's European times now.' Then finally she said: 'Well, just hold out one hand,' and she washed it. Had the bride been the eldest daughter of either of her father's two senior wives he would have washed in place of her brother, and had her own mother not been divorced she would have washed also. 881 584 [17]

though there are no cattle they carry him thus.' The corpse was then 764
taken to be washed. 'We do not examine him; yesterday's corpse we 184
did indeed examine but not this one. He was a senior, a chief,' said his son, and Kakuju confirmed it. 'We do not examine him. We refuse
because he was a senior person.' More cattle appeared—'those of his [643]
son at Masoko'. 'It is the custom,' I was told. 'All the cattle come to mourn. These are the cattle of Mwansasu, the first lot were Mbembela's own. Most (or all of them) were kept by Mwaipungu, the eldest son.'

The drums began again and dancing recommenced. The drums had
been warmed up by a fire. About 200 women and 100 men were [536]
present.

Mbasuke, father-in-law of Mwansasu, brought a heifer calf. Three cows were killed, two after the burial, all belonging to Mbembela and his sons. The heads of the cows killed point towards Sangu country. There was a dispute about one of these cows. They had killed one already which had come for the marriage of a daughter of the family, and they had taken another from the same son-in-law. There was objection, some saying: 'No, we should take one which came from another son-in-law.' All the cattle of Mwansasu and of the deceased were driven through the homestead together, a herd of twenty or so. Then they were gathered at the side, facing the grave. The corpse was carried out to the side of the grave. The chief mourners stood holding the corpse and all the men and women stood up to watch. The noise of wailing was terrific. A son seemed entirely to have lost control. 'Alas Father! Alas Father!' he cried, his body trembling and sweating, the tears running down his face, his hand pointing, shaking, towards the corpse and the grave. A friend was wailing, holding his head with his hands: 'My friend, my friend!' The corpse was laid down by the women and wrapped in more cloths. This took about half an hour. Still we stood and watched while the women began to sit down. Two men (Mwaisalwa III and a half-brother) and one woman (his widow) got into the grave—a tight fit. The corpse was buried with a new pot (a small one, used for serving food), several calabashes including a calabash cup, and a calabash of beer. Some of the beer was taken out just beforehand and left above ground. 'That means he should not go with all our fertility.' A huge calabash had been smashed before this by a son, in an ecstasy of grief. Now another was brought but it was decided not to bury it.

Kiliro explained about the beer: 'Always, when a person has drunk beer during his illness before his death, the remains are buried with him. If he has not drunk beer during his illness none is sought.'

No door was available so a cloth was fixed across the opening of the cave. The women got out of the grave while the men remained in to stamp down the earth. Many people threw handfuls of earth.

opened a trading store at Karonga, under Mr. 175
Monteith Fotheringham, a man of great vigour and capacity. His presence aroused the hostility of the Arabs, who feared the loss of their slaving profits, and a period of fighting followed, in which the Konde took sides with the white man as their one hope. After a great encounter with their enemies, the defeated Konde took refuge in the Kambwe lagoon, the dry reeds on the margin of which were set on fire by the victors. The helpless natives leaped into the water, where many were drowned, and numbers were taken by the crocodiles which swarmed in the lagoon. In 1895 a small force was moved up by Sir Harry Johnston, High Commissioner for the newly formed British Protectorate, and the Arabs were defeated, and their leader, Mlozi, hanged the same day. From that time the Konde have progressed in peace under the influence of Government, Trade, and Missions.

One incident, very striking in itself, may be given 175
as indicating the influence of Chungu. On one of 782
her trips the *Domira*, the steamer of the African Lakes 643
Corporation, went ashore on the sands near Karonga. Vigorous but unsuccessful efforts were made, with the help of great gangs of natives, to float her; and at length Chungu was asked to lend his powerful aid. This was Chungu Mwakasungula II. Taking with him a white cock, he went with his councillors to where the stranded steamer lay helpless on the sand. The following prayer, which he offered, was given to

175 782 me by the son of one of the councillors who stood near him :

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> "Art Thou angry with me, O God, who didst redeem me from slavery? The Angoni mocked me, the Arabs mocked me; then didst Thou cause me to see these mighty ones (the Europeans); and I said, 'Rejoice, for God has heard my prayers.' Who, then, of my ancestors is angry? Against whom have I sinned? For it is they who are my helpers in speaking to Thee. Many of them died by the spear; they saw their families destroyed; they suffered hunger again and again, before the mighty ones came. Now, O God, be merciful, and let the feet of these men come up out of the water."

Then taking water in his mouth he squirted it north and south saying, "I am lord of that country, I Magemo: I am lord of that country, I Kyabara," to which the assembled councillors responded, "E! Magemo; E! Kyabara." Then whirling the cock over his head and dipping it in the water, he gave the signal to the men hanging on the ropes to pull. And the steamer floated off into the water!

185 177 Meantime in the north internal warfare went on intermittently, but no man of outstanding capacity arose to give cohesion to the various families of the

[777] Nyakyusa. Before the arrival of the Moravian missionaries in the area in 1891, various Europeans visited the district. Hunters came and went, and for a brief space there was a station of the Livingstonia Mission not far from Tukuyu. In 1893 the German

Men

of social position are known by the number of *manyeta* 291
(body rings worn on the waist) which they wear: [301
one for a man or woman just "above the common"; 554]
six or seven for a man of high standing. A few women have begun, to their own great discomfort, to wear the immense coils of brass or iron on wrists or ankles which are so popular among other tribes.

Clothes, says an acknowledged authority on the 291
subject, make the man. Not among the Konde. 643
Chungu is a great chief, but his greatness does not 554
depend on what he wears, although there are occasions when he dresses more carefully than at other times. This almost naked man is regarded with a reverence greater than is granted to any but a very few Europeans, and out of all recognition greater than is felt for the native who swaggers about in boots and helmet and white man's clothes. The respect which is accorded to a European depends to-day (though it did not in the past) upon his personal character, his control of resources, the authority which has been bestowed upon him by others. But Chungu, with hundreds of other chiefs throughout Bantu Africa, has a respect which is gained in a totally different fashion. He is in close touch with unseen powers. His prayers have a compelling power, his benediction is priestly, his curse of fearful validity. He is a channel through which may come weal or woe upon the land; and hence his authority depends in no degree upon such an accident as dress.

By almost all who know them the Konde are re- 461
garded as lazy. And to the bustling, and perhaps

CHAPTER V

The Chief & his Counsellors

● 643 THE Chungu of to-day is but a poor shadow of his great ancestors. European power has deprived him of many of his prerogatives, and stripped his person and his office of much that was picturesque, and might well have been preserved. But even in the heyday of their glory, the Chungus were but priest-kings, hampered in their divinity, hedged in their kingship by advisers, limitations, customs, which could not be set aside.

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622 To-day Chungu is but one chief among many; but in the past chiefs of all ranks in the Karonga district were subject to him; acknowledging his superiority, but yet asserting for themselves a considerable amount of independence, even to the extent of making war. First are the chiefs proper, chiefs of the snake, so called because their insignia of office is a buffalo or zebra tail, in which is a powerful medicine made from the flesh of a fabulous flying serpent, and which is believed to give its possessor great influence and authority. Next in rank, and subordinate to chiefs, are the *amafumu*, men who possess a less powerful medicine; and finally men of still less importance, who exercise a strictly local authority.

643 Chungu himself, however, was, and still is, "the man who speaks with God"; and as such he is

hedged with a real divinity, which the limitations to 643
which he has to submit, and the independence of the once-subordinate chiefs, have not yet destroyed. He remains pre-eminently the man of prayer, who carries to the ancestral spirits the petitions of the community, and speaks to them with an authority which no other possesses.

Far excelling in power and authority even the 643
greatest of the chiefs were, and, shorn of much of 645
their glory are, the *amakambara*, the councillors of Chungu. These men are in many cases chiefs of high rank, but even when they are not so, their position endows them with great influence and authority. The principal duties of the councillors were to put the reigning Chungu to death when he became seriously ill, a duty which has necessarily lapsed under British rule; to select, with the help of divination, his successor; to instruct him in his duties, to advise him in all matters which demand decision; and to depose him if he is unsatisfactory.

The health of the priest-king and the welfare of 643
the whole community were inseparably bound up 645
together. A Chungu in health and vigour meant a 771
land yielding its fruits, rain coming in its season, evil averted. But a weak and ailing Chungu meant disasters of many kinds. Smaller illnesses Chungu, very excusably, concealed from his councillors, hoping that his ancestors would hear the prayers which he offered secretly by night. But when serious illness overtook him, the councillors were called to a full meeting by those who were about the person of the

● 643 645 771 chief. For Chungu must not die a natural death; the land would be turned into water should such a calamity be allowed to happen. Having decided that the illness is really grave, the councillors, one by one, give their voice in the formula, "*Siku na mwaka*," literally, day and year; but actually meaning, "Does God die?" In solemn procession these terrible persons enter the house, and, having turned out the chief's wives, lay him down on the floor. Two keep him in that posture, while a third stops his breath by holding his mouth and nostrils, a fourth meanwhile gently slapping him all over the body until the life has gone out of him.

643 645 766 No announcement of the death was made. One of the councillors lived in the royal dwelling, so that if any came to consult Chungu a response might be given, and as he was rarely seen by common men, it was easy to keep up the deception. The councillors with their own hands digged the grave, and on their shoulders, at midnight, carried the body, anointed with lion fat, and enswathed in cloth, to the place of [567] [762] burial. Six or eight slaves, who did not return, went with them. Four went down into the grave to receive the body of their dead master, two at the head and two at the feet, and, in sitting position, held him in their arms. The remaining slaves being placed on the top, the soil was filled in on living and dead.

After the lapse of about a month, a big iron drum, now lost, was beaten, and it conveyed only one message to the people. "*Kutabite ku Mphande*," Mphande (the royal residence) has done its work;

3: Mackenzie M-5 (ca. 1925) 1925
FN17 Ngonde FN17

Chungu is dead. Then the chiefs and their men, 643
fully armed, gathered to the mourning. Weeping 645
there was none, for Chungu must not be wept for; 766
and women were not present, for the mourning for Chungu is war; quarrels may break out among the men, and there may be many deaths before the mourning is over. The chiefs bring oxen for the feast, and gifts of ivory to be laid up in the house where Chungu goes to pray when he prays alone.

The councillors now address themselves to the task 643
of selecting a successor. There are no candidates; 847
for not only must Chungu himself be helped out of
the world, but all his sons, born after his accession, 781
are put to death at birth. Daughters are allowed to live, and sons born before their father attained to the chief dignity, are not under the ban. Here again British rule steps in, but British rule has not yet been able to sweep all fear of the past out of the minds of the people. From among the *Bakerenge*, a circle of families within which the new Chungu must be found, name after name is presented to the spirits by the diviner, and when the divining rod indicates that the right name has been presented, the formula is uttered, "*Abapasi bitike*," the underworld has spoken.

At a great feast, at which all men of royal blood 643
must be present, Mulwa, one of the councillors, by 645
hereditary right offers prayer to the spirits, as if the selection had not already been made:

"Ye chiefs, we pray you to show us our lord, who shall be our leader in all things. Let him be the man of your appointing, not of our desire; to

> • 643 645 whom all the land shall look; who shall go to the holy place to pray for us, who shall guard the sacred objects of lordship. Let him be our food and our shield; let his name be safety for all. I pray to you, chiefs of the past, ye who kill or save alive."

Mulwa, carrying in his hand the "rod of lordship," stands out and looks around on the assembled chiefs. Suddenly he throws the rod at the man selected. Immediately he is seized, with a shout of triumph, "He is our food and our shield." The wailing of his female relatives, who weep as for a dead man, is drowned in the shouting and drumming with which the new Chungu is brought to the sacred house, where he is anointed with lion fat, and seated on the lion skins with which the house is carpeted. In this house are kept all the objects of which he is guardian, the tails of eland, zebra, buffalo, elephant, containing the medicine made from the body of the great snake *inyifuwira*; skins and heads of lions; ivory, cloth, and the rod of lordship.

643 After about three months of strict seclusion, during which his health is carefully noted, lest, being a weakling, he should be a menace to the land, the new ruler is brought to the dwelling which in the meantime has been built for him, and his reign is fairly begun.

643 644 The person of Chungu was regarded with extraordinary reverence. He was not approached by the common people, who were not allowed even to see the man who speaks with God. An immense

enclosure surrounded his dwelling of many houses, 643
where he lived with his wives and slaves, and, always 644
present, some of his councillors. The arrival of visitors was announced by the young men who kept the gates; but only visitors of very high standing were actually admitted to the presence of the chief. If Chungu left the enclosure wearing his crown of black cloth with long streamers, the people hid themselves. When he went on a journey, the older people claimed the right of seeing him and even saluting him as he passed; the younger were rigorously kept out of the way. When he crossed a river the men who carried him must not allow his feet to touch water, which he himself must never touch with his foot, for a flood would follow which would do much damage to the country.

To maintain his dignity, the chief received taxes 643
in kind. His gardens were hoed, and his houses built, 651
by the people. If an elephant was killed its tusks, and part of the flesh, were brought to him. Buffalo was royal game, and the whole carcase was his; his, too, were skins and tails of lion, leopard, and zebra; tusks of hippopotamus, horns of rhinoceros. Once in two years each chief brought him a young cow; and a portion of all spoils of war in prisoners, cattle, and other things, was his due.

Out of his abundance Chungu gave gifts to 643
favourites or valued servants. He received and 644
entertained distinguished visitors, though not all were admitted to his presence. They arrived with horns blowing and drums beating, the leader shouting,

643 644 "Ho, ho, ho, we go to him who kills and saves alive." On arrival, such as had the honour of a personal interview, received his blessing, "May God be gracious to you"; the visitor lying on his back and clapping hands. At parting, perhaps a month later, he was pressed to stay, but the parting benediction was given: "God be with you. May lion and leopard and hyena, snake and tree and personal enemy, be still before you. May you find your family in health." Then taking water, and squirting it from his mouth, he prayed the spirits to care for the departing guest.

643 The duties and powers of Chungu, as they were in the past, and, in diminished glory and extent, still are, may be briefly stated.

1. First and foremost, Chungu is the man who speaks with God, and offers up the prayers of the community in time of war, pestilence, drought, or famine.

[787] 2. Dreams by the official dreamers were brought to him by the councillors, and measures taken to meet the approaching evil by offerings at the graves of his ancestors, and by personal intercession.

3. After consulting his ancestors, he decided questions of peace or war.

643 645 4. Along with his councillors he heard important lawsuits, and appeals against the decisions of other chiefs.

5. He confirmed in their position subordinate chiefs when recommended by his council to do so.

6. The whole land being his, he gave permission to

new-comers, and drove out undesirables; but always with the concurrence of the council. 643 645

7. He gave periodical feasts to all chiefs and their followers.

8. In general, it was the duty of Chungu to keep the land in peace; but no decision of his was valid without the approval of his council.

In the north, across the Songwe, the failure to attain unity of control had as its natural consequence the failure to attain the same imposing ceremonial as at Karonga. The chiefs each retained his independence, and what has now to be said applies equally to the independent chiefs of the north, and to those of the south who were at one time under the dominion of Chungu. 643

A convenient starting-point is the installation of the heir and successor of a chief. The installation of Reuben, which began on 18th September, and ended on 19th November, 1921, is typical of all, and the description which follows was given to me by himself. 643 644 796

On the appointed day he left his home, and accompanied by eight young men who were to be his subordinate chiefs, and official dreamers, and all the young men of his father's principal village, he went to the place which was to be the site of his own village. There good huts were built for him and the eight young chiefs, and mere shelters for the others. The first item in a long ceremonial was the tree-planting. The medicine man took two pots into which he put two *imbipitu* (lion-making medicines), and having filled the pots with earth, he planted a young

•643 644 746 seedling in each, *indola* in one, and *imbandapanda* in the other. Pits to receive the pots were digged by the doctor, and held in position by the two most important of the subordinate chiefs, who, with closed eyes, filled in the soil all around. The two *imbigita* become later the two lions of the young chief. Every chief has these mysterious lions, which are quite harmless except to evil-doers; if any common person creates or controls a lion, it is the duty of these two to slay it. No one may eat food at harvest time until a portion has been set aside for these lions. The two trees in time provide the shade under which the chief's court will sit, and as long as they stand his residence must not be removed from their neighbourhood.

The doctor now took a broom, and swept the dust into the faces of Reuben and his subordinates, praying that the men under them would be in number as the dust of the earth. All the old fires were extinguished, [372] and new fire was made by the young chief and his fellows; at present from two pieces of wood rubbed together, but in the past, the lower was the bone of a leopard or lion specially dried for the purpose. In the old warlike days this fire kindled the courage of the chiefs, but with the peace that has been brought in by the white men such courage is not called for. From the fire thus made, brands were given out to all householders in the district, and no ashes from old fires were allowed to remain in any house.

Next came the great medicine drinking, which was to give authority to the new chiefs. It is indeed a

fearsome mixture: ground flesh of *inyifwira* (the 643
flying serpent); heart and nose of hyena, which 644
enables one to see danger ahead; heart of hawk, 776
giving power to see danger from behind; and heart of the fish-eagle, which swoops down upon its prey. Thus furnished the young rulers can foresee the future, deal with the present, and be a terror to all evil-doers. This powerful medicine is drunk by all chiefs at their installation, and spread under the beds to make them see in dreams what is coming in the future. But never may the chief eat food that is not freshly cooked, for that would take away all virtue even from these potent drugs.

From that time until the 19th November, the young men led a happy, care-free life. Their food was daily provided; cattle were set apart for them; they did not shave all that time, and no girls were allowed to go near them. On the closing day of the ceremonial, the fathers of all the young rulers came and stood at a distance, and the younger brother of Reuben was given a spear with which he knocked on the closed door of the hut in which Reuben and his companions were waiting, and called out, "There is war outside; come out." Immediately all rushed to where the elders were standing, and after greetings, the company formed itself into a boundary commission, to fix the limits of Reuben's authority. Finally, the same day, the new chief was married to 643
the two girls whose offspring will be his successors. 572
They must be daughters of men of note, not cowards in battle, of no reproach in the tribe; and the girls

643 582 themselves must be free from any kind of blemish. They drink a medicine weaker than that taken by their husband, but sufficiently potent to make them respected by all the other women of the district.

The death of a chief, like that of Chungu, is a
622 great event. An immense crowd of men and women
766 gather on these occasions. At the death of Mwafongo, near Karonga, in 1913, fifty head of cattle were killed for the feast. Of these perhaps thirty were the property of the dead chief; the rest were brought by the mourners as a token of respect for the dead man; but for each animal so killed, an equivalent, an ox for an ox, a cow for a cow, was given to the donor from the dead man's herd, so that the herd left by Mwafongo was reduced by fifty at his death. Intense emotion is generated at these gatherings, frequently leading to death. And in the past it was the rule that a chief should not go to his fathers alone. If therefore fighting broke out, and men were killed, it was only right and fitting that this should be so. In 1897 there was a small rising against the Germans, in which the chief Mwakalinga and many of his people were killed. The chief having been killed, it was not surprising that there should be a heavy death-roll among his men. The death of Mwasulama in 1918 was followed, quite naturally, by the influenza which carried off so many of his people.

About a month after the death of the chief, the
622 feasting is resumed, this time with immense quantities of beer which has been prepared in the interval. The new chief is now anointed with oil, and the

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Of the persons officially connected with the spirits, the most important is the chief. It has already been said that "Chungu is the man who speaks with God"; he is also the man who speaks with authority to the spirits. He, and all other chiefs, approach the spirits for the general good, but as heads of families they have the right to offer private prayers as well. Each head of a family may also pray for his own people; but no man may pray so long as his father or elder brother is alive. Next, every chief has an official who may be called a priest; he is the *amwyaga*, the man whose duty it is to go daily at the order of the chief to present an offering at the grave where the last chief is buried. He does not pray; he simply lays the offering, usually a few maize cobs, on the grave and departs. When the chief goes in person to pray, as he sometimes does, without any public ceremony, this man goes with him, hears the prayers, and knows the ritual; and it is he who will teach the new chief his duties when the time comes for him to perform them. When, however, the chief dies, the *amwyaga* is in great danger, for the spirits take possession of his person, a danger which can only be averted by a powerful medicine supplied by the doctor, and taken as soon as the chief has died. If this is not done, he becomes mad, lives in the bush, gibbering and naming all the dead chiefs of the past, including names known to no living person, but supposed to be those of long-dead chiefs, uttered by themselves through him.

778
With regard to places of worship: the "high place" is always at the grave of the dead chief; and

782 here given is obtained from descriptions by persons who were actually present at prayer offered by Chungu. [143] The decision to pray does not originate with the chief himself; it comes from the people, who approach Chungu through the subordinate chiefs, and Chungu, after reminding them that only God can give rain, consents to pray.

In the past a human sacrifice was offered, and the flesh of the victim, burned and ground to powder, was distributed over the district as a "medicine" guaranteed to ensure a good crop. This has long ceased at Karonga; the last known occurrence of it farther north was in 1907, when a boy of about ten was sacrificed; and in 1917 a boy mysteriously disappeared, not without suspicion that he was offered in sacrifice. I have been told that human sacrifice is offered in the Kinga Mountains even now; but, except for repeated statements, I have no evidence. The victim, always a boy, is made to drink beer until he dies, when his body is burned and ground to powder for distribution. The child is selected in secret conclave by the chiefs, and no one knows that the tragedy has taken place until public announcement has been made, except the parents of the boy, whose disappearance must have been known to them. Weeping for the victim is prohibited.

For the ordinary sacrifice offered to-day, a black or white ox or cow, preferably the latter, has to be found, and brought to Chungu. The owner must be paid, and there is a case known where refusal to do so led to the failure of the whole ceremony. When the

The Bakifuma go to the stream to wash, garlanded with flowers, and carrying a small stone. Flowers and stone are thrown into the stream after the washing, and the company re-enter the house. The doctor takes water and pours it on the roof, upon which all come out one by one, the water dripping on each as he or she passes. Anointed with oil, they all go to the place of burial, where, resting on elbows and knees, they draw themselves along the grave, slightly disturbing the soil as they go. The hair is then cut, and the feast follows. 768

When a chief is *in articulo mortis*, his headmen and his wives are present, and he is addressed, while still living, as common men are addressed at the graveside. "Go to God and the spirits; go to your fathers (naming them). Rest there, and tell them what is happening here above." 766 643 622

After he is dead, the nails of his fingers and toes are clipped, and his hair cut, and given to the doctor, who will make medicine with them to prevent the disease which killed the chief passing over to others. The dead man is now dressed as common men are dressed for burial, but much more elaborately, and, if he is a relation of Chungu, he is placed in a sitting position in the house, where his wives and headmen embrace him for the last time. If he is a very important chief, like Chungu, his death is not yet announced to the people.

Meantime a cow has been killed at the place where the body is to be buried, and the headmen dig the grave, usually by night, if intimation has not been

766 made that the chief is dead. The body is brought to the grave by the headmen, and the dead cow is
643 lowered in first; then the chief, in a sitting position,
622 facing the Songo country, if that was his original home. Torches are used if the night is dark. When the grave is filled in, all partake of the medicine made from the dead man's nails and hair. The washing ceremonies are the same as for common men; but the widows will not go near the men who placed the body in the grave until the latter have given them a gift of some kind, though the exact function of the gift is not clear.

No chief of any importance dies a natural death:
643 that is to say, however and whenever a chief dies, it is
761 assumed that some one was responsible. It is believed that chiefs die more easily than common men, and are more open to evil influences; but, on the other hand, they have more powerful medicines to protect them. When Kaloso died in 1910, all his sons and his headmen were put to the poison test, and those who did not vomit were compelled to pay a fine in cattle, a token that complete confidence in the belief in evil influences is passing away; for in earlier times the culprit so discovered would have been attacked as he ran, and would probably have paid the forfeit of his own life. The easier punishment may, however, have been due to fear of the police.

766 Twins were not exposed; but if one of them died, the body was cast into the bush, and wailing was not permitted, for it would cause the death of the other. To-day the body of a twin is buried in the ordinary way, but without wailing.

536 according to the *Bell Report*. Cattle and hides are exported to Tanganyika.[1] The *Nyamwanga* herds were reduced, partly by [illegible] raids, and partly by rinderpest.[2]

Domestic Architecture

361 364 *Ngonde* homesteads are famous in Nyasaland for their peculiar style and neatness of execution. They are made of bamboos, specially grown for the purpose. They are oblong, with the ends slightly tapering upwards so that they present a ship-like appearance. The huts are erected in two lines facing each other, at a distance of about 30 yards. This space in front is kept scrupulously clean.[3] The *Nyakyusa* live in round or long huts of bamboo or grass.[4] *Kinga* homesteads are scattered; they live in round huts of bamboo and straw.[5] The *Iwa* formerly lived in large stockaded villages, but these are now broken up.[6]

Specialization and Trade

316 The *Ngonde* were accomplished iron-workers; iron was dug, smelted, and made into hoes and spears.[7] The *Iwa* were formerly noted as iron-workers. Both they and the *Nyamwanga* grew tobacco on a large scale.[8]

159 241 286 A rough kind of cloth was made on native looms. The *Ngonde* made dugout canoes, but were not good sailors. In fishing they used poisons, [illegible], nets, and traps. Pottery and basket-making were carried on.[9]

177 59 43 The *Ngonde* were the most civilized of this cluster of tribes, owing to their closer contact with Arab and Swahili traders who used the lake as a waterway.[10] The *Nyamwanga* also had opportunities of contact with Arab and Swahili traders at the north end of Lake Tanganyika,[11] but information about the effect of this on their economic life is lacking. By comparison with the *Ngonde* the *Nyakyusa* were isolated from contact with the outside world,[12] and this is probably true of the other tribes of the group. Among the *Ngonde*, in spite of the political hierarchy and central religious authority of Kyungu, economic links between separate local groups were few. The ivory trade was a source of wealth for the Kyungu and for the nobles of Ngonde at Mbande, but its benefits had a strictly limited effect on the rest of the people. The economic links between the capital and the chiefdoms followed the lines of the political system. The income of Kyungu in slaves and cattle depended on the judicial process and on tribute. He had a semi-monopoly of the ivory of the country (the right tusk of every elephant killed was his). His expenditure consisted of entertainment for all important visitors to the capital, and gifts of cloths, obtained through the ivory trade, to nobles and chiefs. The first Kyungu gave head-cloths to the indigenous rulers, who, in accepting them, accepted his overlordship, and the practice was continued every time a new chief or territorial noble succeeded to office. The nobles of Ngonde got cloths every time the Arab traders came. Chiefs bringing food to Mbande, the capital, were

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[1] Bell Report, op. cit., [illegible]
[2] [illegible]
[3] Ibid., p. [illegible]
[4] [illegible]
[5] Gouldsbury and Sheane, 1911, p. [illegible]
[6] [illegible]
[7] [illegible]
[8] Gouldsbury and Sheane, 1911, p. [illegible]
[9] [illegible]
[10] Gouldsbury and Sheane, 1911, p. [illegible]
[11] [illegible]
[12] Ibid., [illegible]

437 given a slave or cow in return. Those who performed hoeing service, *milimo*, were
643 entertained with food and beer.

622 437 The ivory trade, although it bound the local rulers to the capital, involved no tribal organization of elephant hunts, and scarcely touched the common people, who never obtained the imported cloths exchanged for ivory, but continued to dress in bark-cloth or in their coarse home-woven cloth. Between each chief and his people economic links were determined on the one hand by his power of requisitioning food, and his greater wealth derived from the higher bride-price given for his daughters, and on the other by his people's expectation of entertainment from him in return for their food. Economic links between local chiefdoms were tenuous. Subsistence agriculture was practised by each family with the help of village neighbours and a few friends and kin; marriage with its economic exchanges was usually within the chiefdom. Of the few specialized craftsmen, representatives of each were usually found in each local group.[1]

434 435 433 Under modern economic conditions, Ngonde country is the only part of north Nyasaland which cannot be called the 'Dead North', and does not suffer from excessive emigration. The soil is fertile and at present there is no land shortage, though there is likelihood of one developing in the near future. Food is cultivated for export to the Lupa goldfields in Tanganyika, which is the natural market for Ngonde produce. Rice, cattle, and hides are also exported there. Parts of the lake littoral are suitable for cotton cultivation, which was revived in 1934. Ninety tons were sold in 1936. Out of the total effective male population of 12,000, 5,000 grow 'economic crops', and 7,000 grow cash crops only.[2] There are two European coffee estates in the Misuku hills, but they are handicapped by the long dry season.[3] Money is also derived from the fishing industry. An attempt to develop a ghee industry from native butter for sale to Indians in Nyasaland collapsed owing to the apathy of the Ngonde, their neglect of quality, and their insistence on too high a price for their inferior product. The main cash income of the district is derived from emigration to the Lupa goldfields, so that 90 per cent. of the money in circulation in the district is East African currency, which is accepted by the Nyasaland local government, surplus balances being remitted to the District Officer at Tukuyu, Tanganyika.[4]

PERIODIC MIGRATIONS

167 Long-distance labour migration is not a serious problem among the Ngonde, as they are able to earn their main cash income by working in the nearby Lupa goldfields, or by supplying that market with agricultural produce. In north Nyasa district (Ngonde), of 12,030 adult males fit to work for wages, only 11·6 per cent. are labour emigrants, and of these in 1937 only 100 were counted as 'lost ones' (i.e. not heard of since 1930).[5] In Abercorn and Kasama districts, Northern Rhodesia, where the Nyamwanga and Iwa live, 50 per cent. of the able-bodied male adult population is absent.[6]

A local migration of Nyakyusa does constitute a problem for the Tanganyika administration. Up to 1935 some 2,000 families had migrated from Rungwe district to tribal lands in the neighbouring chiefdoms of Mbeya district. By 1941 the figure had increased to 3,000. The immigrants now total 17 per cent. of the whole population

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[1] Wilson, G., 1939, pp. 20-40.
[2] [illegible], 1939, p. 288.
[3] Bell Report, 1938, Appendix A.
[4] Bell Report, 1938, pp. 100-3.
[5] Smith, 1939, p. 61.
[6] Gore Browne, 1938, [illegible].

4: Tew   E.-4   (no date) 1950   FN17 Ngonde FN17

POLITICAL ORGANIZATION

580 Only the Ngonde, the Nyamwanga, and the Iwa seem to have had any paramount authority. Of these, only that of the Ngonde has been described in detail. The Nyamwanga had a paramount chief, the Mukoma, living over the border in Tanganyika. Under him the Northern Rhodesian Nyamwanga were always ruled by his sister, the Wakisika; directly under her were the headmen of villages. The Mukoma used to appoint his own sons or selected friends to be headmen of the larger villages. A nominal tribute, mainly fish, was sent by the Wakisika to the Mukoma, and the latter could also command annual labour in his gardens. The Iwa also had a paramount chief, Kafwimbi, who recognized common ancestry with the Mukoma but paid him no tribute. His country was divided into two sections, under two sub-chiefs, Wyanga and Tembo. The succession to the chieftainship is normally the same as commoner succession, i.e. brothers, then sons of the deceased, but the order need not be rigidly adhered to.[1]

Ngonde Traditional System

643 565 622 631 The section on history briefly indicated the position of the Kyungu. He was wealthy, owing to the ivory trade, and used his wealth to maintain political links with the chiefs and nobles of the country. At the same time he was kept in strict religious seclusion, and the real government of the country was in the hands of the nobles of Ngonde, a group of hereditary nobles, descendants of the original companions of the first Kyungu. The relations of the great chiefs (descendants of sons of Kyungus) and the territorial nobles to the capital allowed of considerable local autonomy, the Kyungu's prestige being mainly religious. Each territorial noble was succeeded by one son; each chief was succeeded by two or more sons, so that the chiefdoms tended to supplant the territorial nobles in importance and number, and the junior branches of the house of any one great chief formed a hierarchy based on descent. The great chiefs, at their accession, were recognized by the Kyungu with gifts of cloth, and they brought the junior chiefs of their house to perform hoeing service, *milimo*, for the Kyungu. Afterwards the junior chiefs performed *milimo* for their great chief, and were similarly rewarded with entertainment. The great chief might invite the territorial nobles in the neighbourhood to accompany him in performing *milimo*, but he could not command them as he could his junior chiefs. Apart from recognizing a certain authority of superior chiefs in judicial matters, and the right of the latter to command them in war, or to war, the junior chiefs had almost complete autonomy in their chiefdoms.[2]

Each chief had a traditional right to demand from his own subjects milk and bananas if he needed them, and to evict any man he pleased if he desired the site for his personal use or to give to a kinsman (not to a commoner), offering the evicted tenant another site.[3]

The chiefdoms[4] consisted of a number of age-villages, older and younger men living apart with their own contemporaries. At the head of each age-village was a headman (called 'great commoner' by Wilson) chosen from among the villagers by the chief

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[1] [illegible]

[2] Ibid., [illegible]

[3] Wilson, G., [illegible]

[4] In the absence of information I do not know whether the following description of Ngonde and Nyakyusa chiefdoms and age-villages is capable of a wider application.

692 Many cases were of course decided by the common people among themselves, others by their great commoners, and others by the local chiefs sitting with their great commoners. Although there was no centralized judicial system, the political hierarchy of chiefdoms sometimes could be used to obtain redress in the case of a quarrel between men of different chiefdoms. The weakness of the system is indicated by the fact that restitution for wrong done was often obtained by the method of capturing a hostage.[1]

681 Witchcraft was punished by death. An adulterer, if caught, was killed by the husband. Deliberate murder required compensation up to ten head of cattle and the transfer of a woman, followed by a feast of reconciliation. If the murderer could not be caught a blood feud would be started, ending with a feast of formal reconciliation under the guidance of a diviner. Accidental homicide required compensation, but no feast of reconciliation, as there had been no malice. A cattle-thief caught red-handed might be killed on the spot; arson was settled by payment of compensation.[2]

MODERN GOVERNMENT

692 642 643 (a) *Ngonde.* The British Government in Nyasaland at first applied the system of direct rule. Chiefs and nobles were recognized as 'village' or 'principal' headmen, performing executive duties for the Administration. The Kyungu was one of the 'principal' headmen, but was not recognized as Paramount. In [illegible] the system was modified by the setting up of advisory councils in association with the headmen and the District Resident. The members of the councils were nominated and removable by the Government, and there was no intention of reviving tribal government.

In 1933 the system of Indirect Rule was introduced. The Kyungu was recognized as paramount chief, with an appeal court and five sub-chiefs under him. Of these, one, Kilupula, was over the northern part of the Ngonde plain, another called the Lambya in the extreme north-west, and the three others were distant territorial nobles ruling groups of clans much in the hills. The nobles of Ngonde, with twelve prominent nobles and six other commoners, were recognized as members of the Kyungu's court and given nominal salaries. Those of the great chiefs of Ngonde who were not made sub-chiefs were officially termed 'important' headmen, and given nominal salaries. The other chiefs and territorial nobles were still termed 'village' headmen as before 1933. The Kyungu and the five sub-chiefs were each given an area and a court for the area. Village and important headmen could arbitrate in small cases but had no power to enforce judgements. That power belonged to the courts alone. The Kyungu's court was also a court of appeal for the whole of Ngonde. A Native Treasury was established, into which one-twelfth of the tax was paid, but this was almost entirely expended on personal emoluments.

The full traditional constitution cannot be revived, as the religious beliefs which supported it have been undermined. Forty-five per cent. of the population profess Christianity, and even the belief in witchcraft, which operated in certain cases as a constitutional check, is less prominent than before. The native rulers are no longer believed to control the rain and the health and fertility of their people, so they stand or fall by the performance of their secular duties alone. Since the Kyungu has come out of religious seclusion the nobles of Ngonde are relegated to advisory status. The secularization of the constitution tends in this respect to make it more autocratic, both

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[1] Wilson, G. 1939 b: 48 sq.

[2] Mackenzie, 1925, pp. 89–90.

622 in the relations between the Kyungu and the nobles, and in those between the local
692 chiefs and their great commoners. On the other hand, there has been a reversal in the
643 relative wealth of commoners and chiefs. The latter have had small salaries substituted for the proceeds of the ivory trade, food tribute, and the booty of war. The decline of polygyny has also reduced the relative wealth of the chiefs. The Kyungu's total official salary in 1937 was £[illegible], and the salaries of sub-chiefs from £[illegible] to £[illegible] per annum. The nobles of Ngonde were paid from [illegible] to [illegible] per annum except [illegible], who got [illegible]. These salaries do not permit of lavish entertainment and gifts to subordinates, and the rulers suffer a consequent loss of prestige. Each village headman is allowed [illegible] in the tax paid by every adult male subject, and, in addition, the 'important' headmen (former great chiefs) receive subsidies averaging about [illegible] per annum. These payments have replaced the traditional right to requisition food. Commoners are frequently richer than their rulers. The head clerk in the Boma got £[illegible] in 1937, and fifty-three other government employees got £[illegible] or more. Young men from the goldmines and native Christian ministers now earn more than do the former great chiefs.

By using his private fortune the present Kyungu has been able to maintain the prestige of his office. He revived the [illegible], [illegible] custom, in 1937 on a new basis. To each chief who [illegible] for him he presented a cow, bought out of the proceeds of the sale of the produce of their labours. The [illegible] profit also enabled him to buy cloth for funeral gifts, a custom which he extended considerably, giving cloths not only at the death of the chiefs, but also to everyone who dies in his part of the plain of Ngonde. The present constitution of Ngonde is more autocratic and more centralized than the old, and thanks to his wealth the Kyungu's secular power is greater than that of his predecessors, in relation to the nobles of Ngonde, and to the chiefs and territorial nobles.

The 'covering out' has ceased since 1913, owing to the conditions of all the present chiefdoms, and the impossibility of finding enough land and followers for new commoners to any local chief. Each chief is now succeeded by a brother or one son only. Subjects are still free to move away from the area of an unpopular headman, thereby reducing his salary by [illegible] per annum.[1] Although the Nyasaland–Tanganyika boundary cuts his sphere of influence, the Kyungu is still often consulted on tribal affairs across the border.[2]

623 (ii) *Nyakyusa*. The government of Tanganyika Territory has grouped the [illegible] or so
692 traditionally independent chiefs into eleven court districts, with one chief as President of the Native Court in each. These eleven chiefs, together with the two presidents of the Ndali and Lambya courts, are federated, and have an appeal court and joint Native Treasury of their own. In the eleven native courts most of the traditionally sovereign chiefs are entitled to sit with their great commoners, and assist the President and his great commoners in the hearing of cases. The bulk of the legal business previously transacted by each chief in his own country is now taken to court, but the power of the great commoners to settle disputes by arbitration in their separate villages is still the basis of the legal system. A poll tax, fixed at [illegible] per annum (1938) for adult males, was introduced, and chiefs are paid small salaries, ranging from [illegible], or [illegible] a month for ordinary chiefs, to [illegible] or [illegible] a month for court presidents.[3]

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[1] Wilson, G. 1939, pp. [illegible].

[2] Wilson, G. 1938, p. [illegible].

[3] Native Affairs Report, 1935, p. [illegible].

PEOPLES OF THE LAKE NYASA REGION
MAIN CULTURAL FEATURES

Religion

769 The ancestor cult was the main feature of Ngonde religion. As long as a man had alive a father, father's full brother, or a senior brother, this senior kinsman dealt with the ancestral spirits, not only on his behalf, but also on behalf of his wives and children. In the absence of sickness or misfortune no appeal was made to the spirits. If the diviner diagnosed anger of the ancestors as cause, the senior kinsman had to pray for the sick one. If the half-brothers lived at a distance from each other after the death of their father and uncles, each might pray to the spirits to cure a little sickness, but if it persisted a message had to be sent to the senior kinsman. Wrongs which aroused the anger of the spirits were usually breaches of family morality, insult to a father, neglect of responsibilities by an heir. Offerings consisted of a bull, hen, or beer in the case of commoners, a cow in the case of a chief. The worship of dead chiefs as such was not connected with everyday morality. On the offering of cows by chiefs to their immediate ancestors depended the food and health of the chiefdom and the fertility of women and cows.[illegible]

769 643 Each Kyungu was buried in the valley around Mbande, and the grave was planted with trees, making a sacred grove. In times of drought and widespread sickness, sacrifices were made at the graves under the guidance of a diviner.[illegible] An insult to the living Kyungu was believed to cause a drought. Each chief or noble was believed to be able to avert local misfortune for his own people, and the head of every family participated in the divinity of his own ancestors. The great commoners of each chief were believed to have independent access to his ancestral spirits, and so to have a hold upon him. The nobles of Ngonde had a similar power over the Kyungu.

643 As the Kyungu's health was bound up with the welfare of the community, elaborate precautions to maintain his health and to protect him from the danger of sexual impurity were taken, and when he ailed he was killed by suffocation.[illegible]

778 Sacred lagoons by the lake were associated not with the ancestors, but with a vague supreme deity, *[illegible]*.[illegible]

796 There were two important annual rituals for the whole valley in addition to the special sacrifices to avert misfortune. One was the clearing out of the [illegible] each year after the break of the rains, which was performed on the order of the Kyungu, given through the nobles of Ngonde. The second was the elaborate first-fruits ceremony: first-fruits were offered by the nobles of Ngonde, at the grave of the last dead Kyungu, and then by the great chiefs, each at the grave of his own predecessor. The nobles and the chiefs of the hills had similar rituals, but they were not synchronized with those of the plain.[illegible]

Witchcraft

754 636 The Ngonde believe that certain men and women have the power of harming their neighbours and neighbours' cattle without taking any overt action. The witchcraft is hereditary, and of particular virulence if inherited through the mother.[illegible] Witches exert their influence at night in dreams. There are two kinds of witches, [illegible], [illegible]

[illegible] Wilson, [illegible]
[illegible] Wilson, [illegible]
[illegible] [illegible]
[illegible] [illegible]
[illegible] [illegible]
[illegible] Wilson, [illegible]

643, 622

[Since the Ngonde and the Nyakyusa peoples have slightly different political systems, for the purpose of this file, the Kyungu of the Ngonde people is marked for 643, and the chiefs of the individual chiefdoms for 622; however, when the text is referring to the Nyakyusa people, the chiefs of the individual chiefdoms are marked for 643, and the village headmen for 622.]

It is unusual for a sociologist to find such a simple problem§ for analysis as this and it was not long before the answer was plain. The Nyakyusa, until a few decades before the coming of the Europeans, had been largely isolated from any vigorous external contacts; Ngonde, on the other hand, had been effectively related to the outside world for generations. The Nyakyusa actually possessed in the Lwembe, the hereditary chiefs of Lubaga, a line of spiritual paramounts or high priests, whose religious functions were remarkably similar to those of the Kyungu in Ngonde; but, poor and isolated as they were, they had never developed any secular paramountcy at all. The reasons for the greater elaboration of the traditional political system of Ngonde were to be found above all in the ivory trade and in the constant influx of immigrant groups. 642 177

And it further became clear that the prestige which the present Kyungu enjoys in the changed conditions to-day is due in large part to his having followed the mercantile traditions of his predecessors, mastered the business methods of the Boma, made a fortune, and then kept up his position out of his own private means.

2. THE CHRONICLE OF NGONDE (TO 1875).

In studying the present constitution of Ngonde and the profound changes now taking place in it, we cannot find any point of time at which the process of change began. In its present radical form social change in Ngonde arises from the ferment of a host of new social conditions imported by European missionaries, traders and Government officials. But the Arabs also brought change to Ngonde and before the Arabs the Ngoni, while before the coming of the Ngoni there is evidence to suggest that changes had arisen, on more than one occasion, in the normal behaviour of the men of Ngonde which were stimulated, not by any new contacts with the outside world, but simply by accidents of their own internal history. Social change in Ngonde, as far as we can see, has always been going on. 177 178

In this section the political history of Ngonde is described in outline from the its beginnings to the coming of the Europeans in 1875, in so far as it can be recovered from the oral tradition. In later sections a systematic analysis is attempted, first of the constitution of Ngonde just prior to that date, and then of the changes in it which have since taken place. 178

(a) THE EARLY KYUNGUS.

It is generally agreed that the ancestors of the Kyungus, the present hereditary chiefs of Ngonde, came from the Livingstone Mountains in 178 643

§[The dissimilarity between the Ngonde and the Nyakyusa political systems. — Analysis]

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the north east, that they passed westwards near Rungwe Mountain and out into "the country of the Bisa," only to turn eastwards again to the Songwe River. Then they journeyed southwards through the hills to the present Karonga and finally turned back to Mbande.

In the Livingstone Mountains, the country of the Kinga, the first name which the men of Ngonde remember is that of Ngulube,[5] and from him not only the Kyungus but also the chiefs of the Nyakyusa and of the Kinga are said to be descended. While on his tortuous journey from the Livingstone Mountains to Mbande the Kyungu is said to have started out with three brothers and a sister, and to have left them all behind at different places. One brother founded a line of [illegible] chiefs, another of [illegible] chiefs, while the third, [illegible], together with their sister, followed the Kyungu to the Lambya near the upper Songwe and stayed there. [illegible] had a son [illegible] and his sister had a son [illegible], and still to-day there is rivalry between their two houses for the leadership of this group of Lambya.

On reaching Mbande the Kyungu found it already occupied by Simbowe.[6] "Simbowe built on Mbande before the Kyungu; he was a clever hunter. He found that elephants were very plentiful here and so built on Mbande. He was a Fipa by birth and had come from the north." Then the Kyungu drove Simbowe from Mbande back to the land of the Fipa and captured a great deal of ivory. The usual version of this story is full of miraculous incident, telling, first, how he hid from Simbowe in a tiny pile of grass and, then, how he took Mbande without a blow by creating elephants, buffaloes and guinea-fowl for Simbowe and his people to hunt, and climbing the hill when it was deserted. Once on top he beat his drum and the men of Simbowe heard it and fled. Miraculous power and the possession of ivory—

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[5] One of our best informants in history, the late Kasitu [illegible], took the legend further back still: "He came from the country of the Kinga, yes, but originally he came from the north; his body was pale and he came to the land of the Kinga and took it; and men said 'he is a pig! (ngulube)' because his body was pale. He spoke the language of the *Abalungwana* (Arab or half-Arab traders). Then they gave him the name Ngulube (a pig) and thereafter he lived in Kinga country and begot [illegible]."

No one else directly supported this, but Peter, the present Kyungu, told us: "In the sacred groves of the old Kyungus there used to be iron implements of unusual pattern—knives, axes, and spears. The Kyungu brought them with him from the north when he first came. I have seen them myself ... but now the [illegible] have stolen them all. And on the hill Mbande I have seen very old pottery." And he also maintained, as we shall see, that the early Kyungus used to trade ivory northwards from Ngonde. And Kasitu [illegible] said also that the first Kyungu brought cloth with him when he came. Thus, though proof is impossible, there is a suggestion in the legends of Ngonde that the chiefs in this part of the world are direct descendants of early Arab or half-Arab traders from the East African coast.

[6] The similarity of this name to "Zimbabwe" appears to be accidental.

already in the earliest legends are reflected the twin sources of the Kyungus' supremacy, for, as we shall see, they combined divine kingship with wholesale ivory trading. [73 64?

The Kyungu who took Mbande was not alone; he brought with him into Ngonde five leading men whose names are still borne by their descendants: [illegible], Mulwa, [illegible], [illegible] and Ngosi. Nor did he find the country empty; besides Simbowe, who was himself a recent immigrant, there were: [illegible], [illegible], [illegible], [illegible], [illegible] and others; they all had men of their own, and, with the exception of Simbowe who fled, they all accepted the Kyungu as their overlord. To this day some of these names also survive in Ngonde. The Kyungu, according to the late [illegible],[1] brought cloth with him and used it to consolidate his position: "Then the Kyungu gave loincloths to us nobles, to [illegible], [illegible] and the others; and he said to us: 'You are the priests, you the indigenous owners of the land, do you pray for me that I, the chief, may sleep in peace.'"

I make no attempt here to date the arrival of the Kyungu in Ngonde, for to do so would require a careful collation of this tradition with those of neighbouring tribes. The present Kyungu is said to be about the eighteenth of that title in Ngonde, but, as the reigns of many Kyungus were very short and as some early names have probably been forgotten, this fact alone tells us little.

For the period from the coming of the first Kyungu to the birth of [illegible] (who was about the tenth Kyungu in Ngonde) the legends are scanty and vague; but the following facts are generally attested by them. The leading men among the Kyungu's followers, together with the rulers of the indigenous population, came to form a class of hereditary nobles ([illegible]), within which, as we shall see, two groups were distinguished, those who lived near Kyungu at Mbande and those who did not. Important immigrants with followers of their own continued to enter Ngonde after the coming of the Kyungu and they also became hereditary nobles, either in the one group or in the other. The Kyungus, though credited with divine powers and enriched by the ivory trade, had but limited powers of secular action; they lived a life of religious seclusion, while the nobles ruled the country. Most of the male children of the Kyungu were killed at birth, and they themselves were killed when they fell sick, lest their sickness should spread magically among their people. [73 64? 586

These early Kyungus lived with their wives on the top of the hill Mbande, inside a great enclosure. Near them, some on Mbande, some not, lived a group of nobles. This group, which is specifically referred

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[1] [illegible] [illegible]. He has died since we left Ngonde.

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to as "the nobles of Ngonde" (*Awagonde*) included, firstly, the successors of those five leading men whom the first Kyungu brought with him[1], secondly the successors of two of the indigenous rulers whom the Kyungu had found in the country and who happened to live near Mbande[2] and, thirdly, seven others who joined the group later.[3] These fourteen nobles lived at Mbande, each with a group of followers and exercised the central power at the Kyungu's command, or at least in his name. The names of all fourteen are still borne as hereditary titles by their successors in Ngonde to-day and, with two exceptions,[4] all their successors still rank as nobles of Ngonde.

Besides the nobles of Ngonde near Mbande there were the other nobles "who lived at a distance," some in the plain, some in the hills. In the language of Ngonde they are simply referred to by the general term "nobles" (*[illegible]*) but, in order to distinguish them from the nobles of Ngonde, I shall here call them "territorial nobles."

They consisted, firstly, of those indigenous rulers whom the first Kyungu found in Ngonde but who did not happen to live near Mbande, and, secondly, of important immigrants who constantly arrived in Ngonde with followers of their own and were given land. Some of these immigrants came from the east across the lake, others from the west, from what is now Northern Rhodesia. The present Kyungu gave us a list of thirty-seven families of territorial nobles, of whom only five or six were found in Ngonde by the first Kyungu, the remainder having entered afterwards. How many of these thirty odd immigrants came during the period of the early Kyungus and how many later we do not know.

In the middle period of Ngonde's history, as we shall see, two tendencies are manifest: the Kyungus begin to emerge from their religious seclusion and slightly to increase their secular power at the expense of the nobles of Ngonde, while the "son of the Kyungu" increases in [illegible], sets up hereditary chieftains under him and gradually oust the territorial nobles from the Ngonde plain. But in this early period the nobles were the only effective rulers. At Mbande the nobles of Ngonde

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[1] [illegible], [illegible], [illegible], [illegible] and [illegible].

[2] [illegible] and [illegible].

[3] [illegible] and [illegible] were both of the same line as [illegible] but acquired [illegible] of it and both became nobles of Ngonde. [illegible] Besides these, three of the later immigrants became nobles of Ngonde. [illegible]

[4] The two exceptions are [illegible] and [illegible]. [illegible]

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mediated between the divine Kyungu and the outer world, while both in the hills and in the plain the territorial nobles governed each his own people without royal rivals—for most of the sons of the Kyungus were killed at birth.

The exact conditions which led to this state of affairs are beyond our knowledge; there is no detailed evidence to explain just how the descendants of a wandering adventurer who succeeded to the camp and the ivory of "a great elephant hunter" should have become divine kings jealously controlled by their subordinates. All we can do is to set down in all its vagueness and uncertainty, such information as the tradition offers us.

The three crucial facts were, firstly the wealth of the Kyungus, which gave the other nobles a secular interest in them, secondly the constant immigration of important men, which kept up the numbers of these other nobles, and, thirdly, the killing of most of the sons of the Kyungus at birth; a custom whereby the territorial nobles were rid of possible rivals and the nobles of Ngonde were rid of possible supporters of the Kyungu against themselves. Reuben Mwamfumbo told us: "They feared that, if the Kyungu had many sons, they might seduce his wives and so bring sickness on him himself and on the country." And they also feared that, if many of the Kyungu's sons grew up, they might destroy the nobles, they might ask, when the Kyungu died, how it was that he had died so suddenly!—I refer to his being killed when he fell sick or cut himself.—If there were only a few sons they would not protest (being only few), but if there had been many then all the nobles might have had their throats cut. So they kept two sons only alive. This was told me by the old Mwalwa,* the father of the present Mwalwa. He knew a great deal about the things of old. I asked him one day why the sons of Kyungu had been killed and he answered what I have just told you." Two reasons are given here: first the magical danger to the Kyungu (and through him to his people) of infidelity on the part of his wives, for his sons would naturally have more access to the sacred enclosure than other men; and second the danger that his sons might prevent his being killed when sick. The danger that they would supplant the territorial nobles is not mentioned, but it is hard to believe that the nobles were not conscious of it.

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The nobles, both territorial and of Ngonde, still speak of themselves to-day as a single group with common interests opposed, to some extent, to those of the Kyungu and the chiefs; and, when we compare Ngonde with the Nyakyusa, it seems probable that there was some causal connection between the wealth of the Kyungus and the constant increase

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* *Vide infra* Section 7 (b).

*Mwalwa is the present noble of Ngonde.

643 565 in the nobles' numbers by immigration, on the one hand, and the close hold maintained by the nobles of Ngonde over the family life of the early Kyungus, on the other. The Lwembe of Lubaga was, like the Kyungu, an immigrant into his district and he also had a group of hereditary priests living with him who, both in their origins and their religious functions exactly corresponded to the nobles of Ngonde; and they used to kill the Lwembe when he fell sick. But they neither developed many secular functions themselves nor ever prevented the royal family of the Lwembe from increasing. The sons of the Lwembe founded hereditary chiefdoms from the first. There had been indigenous rulers among the Nyakyusa prior to the coming of the Lwembe, but they were soon displaced by his sons and did not maintain themselves within the constitution. But then the Lwembe was poor, and among the Nyakyusa there was not the constant immigration of important men unrelated to the Lwembe[1] as there was into Ngonde of important men unrelated to the Kyungu. The comparison thus suggests very strongly a causal connection between these facts; but the exact mechanism of the connection is obscure.

173 (41) 566 The reasons for the killing of the Kyungu himself will be fully discussed in section three. But it must be mentioned here that the history of Ngonde is full of refusals on the part of prospective heirs to accept the position of Kyungu, and that one of the reasons for refusal was the short life that a Kyungu so often had. In order to refuse it was usually necessary to flee, for an heir once forcibly seized by the nobles of Ngonde and set on the stool of the Kyungus could not abdicate; if he did it was believed he would die. And thus was founded the house of [illegible] (or [illegible]) in the plain north of Songwe River. One of the early Kyungus died and "two of his sons, [illegible] and a younger brother, fled across the Songwe to live, to their grandfather; for the name [illegible] is in origin a noble not a royal name, the Kyungu had married the daughter of the noble [illegible]. They fled because they feared to die on Mbande!"

In time the house of [illegible] became hereditary chiefs and began to spread their power through all the surrounding plain. But later the Nyakyusa came down from the hills and drove them back across Songwe. The boundaries of Ngonde[2] in this early period, were thus wider than they are to-day. The plain north of the Songwe (which the

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[1] There was another immigration into the district of the Nyakyusa, but it was led, so says tradition, by a close kinsman of the Lwembe, whose sons, like the Lwembe's sons, became hereditary chiefs. (The Kukwe are ignored in this footnote.)

[2] Using "Ngonde" always in the sense of the area of the Kyungu's supremacy.

Nyakyusa chiefs afterwards conquered, but which is still known as 173
"Mu-Ngonde") was certainly included in it. And the men of Ngonde 565
also claim that Mwaweha of the Ndali hills, and Mujamba and others in 613
the present Northern Rhodesia were nobles of the Kyungu and sent him
tribute.

How much secular power the Kyungus and nobles of Ngonde then had we cannot know; but, as in the later period it can be proved to have been more effective in the plain near Mbande than in the hills, it is not unreasonable to suppose that so it was in the early period also.

Trade with the outer world there was, so legend says, from the 173
first, and this trade went north. The present Kyungu told us: "The 439
Kyungus used to send ivory to the coast, they sent men over the hills of the Ndali; the ivory that they took from Ilembelwe went that way. And the men used to come back with cloths and iron goods and white crockery. This I heard from Mwakalengela who died as a very, very old man in the year 1900 or perhaps it was 1901."

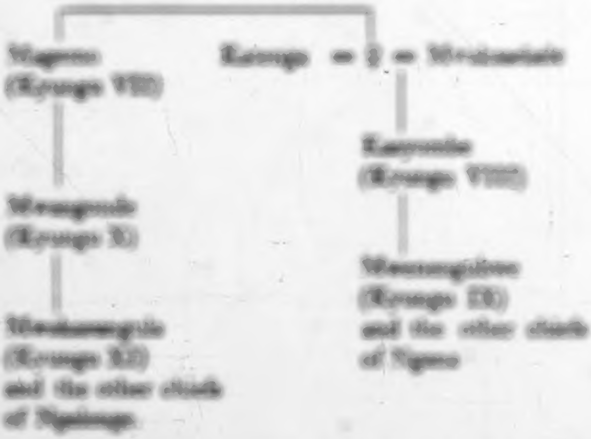
In later times the central power of the Kyungu and the nobles of 173
Ngonde can be proved to have rested on the twin bases of religious 565
faith and the control of great wealth; as these two conditions seem both 613
to have been present in the early period we can assert with some confidence that then also they were the real bases of the central power.

(iii) A TURNING POINT.

"Kyungu Magemo had a sister who was married to Katenga, one 173
of the nobles of Ngonde. And one day when the other nobles of Ngonde 613
went to Ngana (a district of Ngonde) to fish—for fish were plentiful in Ngana—this woman followed them, and thereafter married Mwakasekele a man of Ngana. So the nobles returned and told Magemo that his sister had been taken to wife in Ngana, and all he said was, 'very well.' Later she bore a son to Mwakasekele and Kyungu Magemo named him Kasyombe."

Now Magemo himself when he died left only one son, Mwangonde, and he had only survived by an accident. Mwangonde's mother came from Rutambo (in the present Northern Rhodesia) and was a distant relative of Mulwa, another noble of Ngonde. Her delivery was unexpected and took place in the house of one of Mulwa's poor kinsmen. So Mulwa hid her and the child, and then sent her away to Rutambo. The other nobles of Ngonde accused him of having done so and were angry, for they wished to kill the child if it were a boy. Mulwa denied his action, but afterwards they heard that the child was a boy and alive. Now but for Mulwa the direct line of the Kyungus would have died out, for apparently those sons of Magemo who had been kept alive died[1] before him, and Mwangonde was his only surviving son. But even so Mwangonde was far too young to inherit when Magemo died, he was only an infant; and so the nobles of Ngonde took Kasyombe both to inherit Magemo's wives and to be the Kyungu.

The Early Kyungu



This was a turning point in Ngonde's history: Kasyombe's descendants are the "chiefs of Ngana," or "the commoners" (*Abatumi*), Mwangonde's descendants are the "chiefs of Ngabinga,"[2] the direct line; and Ngonde's history from this time on is full of their rivalry. Not only did two royal lineages result from this event but other momentous political changes as well. For Kasyombe when he succeeded had an adult son, Mwafulinga, who had been brought up in Ngana and was not afraid of the nobles at Mbande.[3] "When they took Kasyombe to be the

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[1] It is also said that Magemo "went mad and killed his own children."

[2] "These are territorial and not family (or clan) names. Kasyombe and his descendants are called chiefs of Ngana because his mother's husband, the commoner Mwakasenele, lived in Ngana. And as for Mwangonde, when he returned from the hills, settled in Ngabinga and begot children there before he was taken to be Kyungu. And so his sons are called chiefs of Ngabinga."

[3] The point is this: the two sons of the Kyungu who had been normally allowed to survive, in the early period, were brought up at Mbande to respect and fear the nobles of Ngonde as their "fathers," and do not seem to have had many personal followers of their own. Moreover if both survived their own father, the Kyungu, then both would be prospective successors and each would be far too much concerned with his own destiny to worry about anything else (cf. the story of Kameme on page 17). But Mwafulinga was an outsider and so had a far greater freedom of action; and he seems to have had followers of his own.

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Kyungu his son Mwalongo approached the nobles and said that if they killed either his father or any of his brothers then he would kill them all. And thus it was that the chiefs of Ngana increased so greatly. But as for killing the Kyungu, the nobles did so in spite of Mwalongo's threats! And when Mwangonde succeeded, the chiefs of Ngana came again to the nobles and forbade them to kill his sons; so thus the chiefs of Ngulinga increased also. And yet, seeing that there were only a few sons of Mwangonde and many daughters we think that, after all, some of his sons were put away! When one of Mwangonde's wives whose father was an important man bore a son, then they would let him live, fearing lest the chiefs of Ngana be told; but if her father was a man of no great weight then they would kill her son."

On the return of Mugasa Kasyombe begot Mwenesyalwe, Kalambo, Kilagwila, Mwakalambo and other sons too; while Mwangonde, when he grew up begot Kalonga, Mpata, Mwasanda, Mbotta and so on. The killing of the sons of Kyungu was, if not quite abandoned, at least limited; and from that time onwards the power of the nobles began to lessen.

There seems no reason to doubt the accuracy of this story, which is universally current in Ngonde to-day; and if we can accept it we have here one of those historical events in which chance circumstances have radically altered the customary behaviour of a group of people. Had Mwangonde not been saved by Mulwa, the line of Ngana would have succeeded alone and finally* to the Kyungu-ship; had Mwangonde been older when Mugasa died it would not have succeeded at all; and in neither case would two royal houses have been set up. Had Kasyombe not happened to have a determined and forceful son, the killing of the sons of Kyungu would not then have been stopped. But, as it was, the existence of the two lines of chiefs, together with the continual increase of both led to a transformation of Ngonde's constitution.

And there is another minor change which tradition traces to this same event. In the times of the early Kyungus, we are told, Katenga was the premier noble of Ngonde; but after his wife left him for Mwakasimbi, without protest from his royal brother-in-law, he retired for a time from public life and Mulwa, who soon afterwards gained fame as the saviour of the Ngulinga line, took his place. And Mulwa is still the premier noble of Ngonde to-day.

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*But what of the line of the Kasyombe? There is here an old constitutional principle involved which we did not sufficiently study. It appears that once a son of the Kyungu had fled from succession his descendants could never succeed again. (cf. The case of Kalinga pp. 27-8). But this principle no longer operates to-day, for both the present Kyungu and his predecessor were sons of Muhimu, who himself fled from the succession (cf. p. 67).

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(c) *THE MIDDLE KYUNGUS: CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGE*

When Kasyombe died Mwenengubwe succeeded, for Mwangonde, though now grown up, was still living in Butambo. Mwenengubwe was the eldest of those sons whom Kasyombe had begotten on the wives of Magemo, and he began that process of gradual emergence from religious seclusion which the present Kyungu has completed. The early Kyungus had all lived on the top of Mbande, cut off from the outside world not only by their enclosure but also by the steep sides of the hill; Mwenengubwe and his successors lived in the plain at its foot, by the Lukulu River. This change appears to have been connected with the unsuccessful effort of the chiefs of Ngana to control the killing of the Kyungus. Three of the present nobles of Ngonde took me up Mbande and explained on the way: "At first all the Kyungus were installed on the summit of the hill, but Mwenengubwe came down to the valley; Kasyombe was the last to live on the summit. The Kyungus came down to the valley because they were afraid to live on the hill, they thought that no Kyungu ever lived long on Mbande, always they died quite soon. And so, after Mwenengubwe had come down from the hill, they installed his successors in the valley, in the house of the Kyungu." But still they lived at Mbande in the midst of the nobles of Ngonde, and still their houses were surrounded with an enclosure that only the nobles of Ngonde might freely enter.

On the death of Mwenengubwe, Mwangonde succeeded.[1] From now onwards the traditions of Ngonde are full of warfare, civil and tribal; but more important than the wars themselves are the accompanying constitutional and commercial changes of which we get occasional glimpses.

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About this time the direction of the trade in ivory changed. The present Kyungu told us: "Later, after the first Kyungus, Mwangonde and his successors used to exchange the ivory with Marabi who came from across the lake; the men of Mwela rowed them across. These traders brought cloths, red and white and dark cloths. But when the first Kyungu arrived in Ngonde there was no trade-route across the lake at all." And one of the Kyungus about this time is said to have "struck the lake and walked over to Mwela to marry a woman, Mapunda." And the present Kyungu told us that, besides the trade with these Marabi, there had also been trade with the men of Mwela themselves, etc. with the Kisi. With the people of Mwela they exchanged canoes for hoes. And from the Kisi also they got hoes, which the Kisi in their turn had got in exchange from the Kinga. 173 443 437

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[1] "When Kasyombe died Mwenengubwe inherited the position of Kyungu. Mwangonde refused it and continued living with his mother's family in Butambo. But the nobles discussed together and decided it was not fitting that Mwangonde should live in another country and they went to invite him back. He agreed to come; at first he only paid a short visit to Ngonde and went back again, but the second time he came and stayed. So when Mwenengubwe died they set Mwangonde on Mbande."

Then, during the reigns of Mwangonde and his successors "the sons of the Kyungu" began more and more to displace the territorial nobles as rulers of the various districts of the Ngonde plain. They became hereditary chiefs (*amanyafyale*), each of whom was succeeded by two or more sons, who divided his country and tried to extend it. And thus the number of ruling chiefs now began to increase at a great rate. 173 643 565 622 Each of the territorial nobles, on the other hand, was only succeeded by a single heir. Houses of chiefs were set up and a new hierarchy appeared, for the senior chief in each house ranked as the "father" of his juniors. The name of the founder of each house was perpetuated as a hereditary title borne by each head of that house in turn. Thus to-day we find in the Ngonde plain the house of the Karambos, (or Mwenitetes),[1] the house of the Kalongas, the house of the Mwakasungulas and so on, and, among the chiefs of Ngosa, the house of the Mwahengas, the house of the Mwenengabwas, the house of the Kalembos, the house of the Kilopulas and so on. The heads of these houses were the great chiefs of Ngonde, subordinate to the Kyungu and each with a number of junior chiefs traditionally subordinate to him. Most of these great titles can be traced back to some important son either of Mwangonde or of Kasyombe; but in some cases junior branches also have acquired sufficient importance to be distinguished by hereditary titles which are borne by their heads[2]. Whenever the bearer of one of these great titles became the Kyungu, his old title was at once taken by a successor in his house.

The chiefs supplanted the territorial nobles and took their subjects for their own in this way: "A great many territorial nobles have lost their power, for the Kyungus were in the habit of sending their sons to build with them in their countries. A Kyungu would send one of his sons (*i.e.* a chief) to a certain noble saying 'I send this your son to build with you, his *father*'—*for the nobles were called* '*father*' by the sons of the Kyungu—, so the noble would welcome him. But in after years the people would give their affection to the son of the Kyungu and the noble would lose his power. And yet, even so, in the old days the two of them, *chief and noble*, would remain on *friendly terms*." . . . . "Some of the nobles lost their power through the cunning of the chiefs. For example the noble Mwenifumbo used to have a country of his own,

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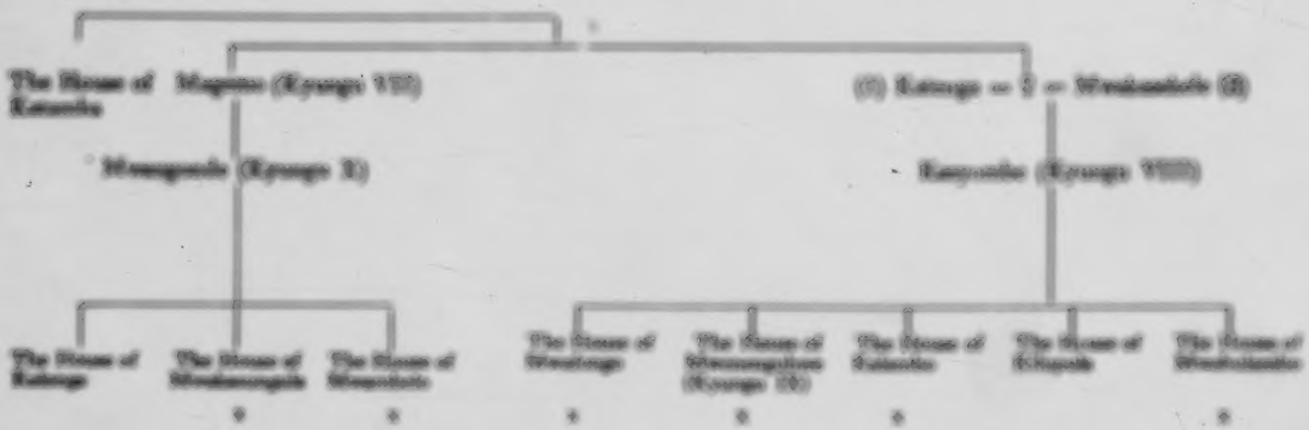
[1] This house, as we have seen, dates from the early period.

[2] The first Malema, for instance, was a son of Mwakasungula, the first Kajuni of Mwenengabwa.

[text continues on p. 21]

THE TWO ROYAL LINES (MIDDLE PERIOD)

THE EARLY KYUNGUS



The House of
(Kyungu VII)
(Kyungu X)
(Kyungu VIII)
The House of
The House of
The House of
The House of
(Kyungu IX)
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The House of

* = Houses which actually provided Kyungus in the middle period.

but then he was given a young chief, Mwakijola, to look after as a child. The father of Mwakijola (who was not the Kyungu) asked [illegible] to bring him up; but then when he grew up he became the ruler of the country!" And others lost their power to young chiefs who had married their daughters and then come to live near them. 173 643 585 623

Now all informants agree on three points:- Firstly that it was the prestige of the royal blood which was responsible for this loss of power, secondly that the process was a gradual one and thirdly that the chiefs and the dispossessed nobles generally continued to live together on amicable terms. "The people gave their affection to the son of the Kyungu," but not all at once; some men or few would continue to regard themselves as the noble's men while others looked more to the chief. The noble acquiesced in this process and became in the end but the most important and respected commoner of the new chiefdom. For the chiefs apparently always treated such nobles with the greatest consideration, continued to call them "father" and to defer to their advice. The nobles retained all their religious functions and their right to participate in the selection of Kyungus and great chiefs, while their own titles continued to be handed on with due ceremony to their successors. All that they lost was leadership in war, the power of requisitioning food, together with the main responsibility for feasting the common people, and the formal position of chief justice. But in actual fact a noble's opinion on a law case was probably seldom disputed by the chief who had asked for it.

We have already suggested that during this middle period the balance of secular power between the nobles of Ngonde and the divine Kyungu himself began to change, and we have noted his descent from Mbande and the stopping of the killing of his sons as undoubted examples of this. But the nobles of Ngonde still had the real power at Mbande: "they alone conversed with the Kyungu; no one else saw him except when they went in to make obeisance. All orders came from them. Even with the [illegible], the wives of the Kyungu, it was the nobles of Ngonde who put each one into the house of the Kyungu for a week at a time and then took her out and put in another. No one else built their houses near the Kyungu except these nobles (and their own immediate followers)." 173 643 585

Such incidents as the going to war of Kyungu Mwakasungula, and the abandonment of the custom of building an enclosure (ulupaso) in the reign of Mwambuli[1] seem significant in the light of modern developments; but we cannot be sure that any very radical constitutional change would

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[1] Vide infra pp. 38-9.

[7] (49) 565 necessarily have followed from them, had modern conditions been different. The evidence is inconclusive.

565 642 622 Now not all territorial nobles in the Ngonde plain have been supplanted by "the sons of the Kyungu" even to-day; while in the hills inland they have mostly retained their power. And so in discussing the political system of Ngonde under the middle Kyungus, it is necessary to distinguish carefully between four different kinds of political unit: (1) the chiefdoms in the plain, each ruled by a hereditary chief related to the Kyungu; (2) the fiefs (if I may adapt this word from a feudal to a primitive context) in the plain, ruled by hereditary nobles unrelated to the Kyungu; (3) the fiefs in the hills inland, also ruled by hereditary nobles, but differing in many ways from the fiefs in the plain, and (4) the chiefdoms of the houses of Ngonde and Kameme in the hills.

642 622 This paper is mainly concerned with chiefdoms and fiefs of the plain. There each of the chiefdoms consisted, as among the Nyakyusa, of a group of age-villages, older and younger men living apart with their own contemporaries. At the head of each village was a headman, or great-commoner (*ulifumu*) chosen for life from among the villagers by the chief and the great-commoners (*amafumu*) of the senior villages of the chiefdom. Except in the case of very small chiefdoms each chief was succeeded by two or more sons who divided the villages among them. The transference of power from the old chief to his sons normally began in his lifetime at the "coming out" (*ubusoka*) when they were formally shown to the country as chiefs and magically treated. The constitution of every chiefdom was that of limited monarchy, for the chief was dependent upon his great-commoners, who advised and, in many ways, controlled him. In the status of chief and great-commoners religious elements played an important part.

642 622 (49) 565 But, whereas among the Nyakyusa each chiefdom, save the very small ones, was, in secular matters, quite independent of its neighbours and each chief was a sovereign, in Ngonde, on the other hand, the wealth of the Kyungu and the nobles of Ngonde made them the apex of a political hierarchy. And thus, while among the Nyakyusa the senior of two brother chiefs could only command his junior in religious matters, when they sacrificed to their common father's spirit, in Ngonde he could occasionally command him in other ways also, he could, for example, summon him to war or to hoe,[8] and he had a certain slight judicial authority.[9] Of two brother chiefs the junior was subordinate to the senior; in each of the great houses all other chiefs were subordinate to the head of the house, the great chief with a hereditary title;

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[8] Vide infra sections 4 and 6.

[9] Vide infra section 5.

[text continues on p. 24]

642 the great chiefs themselves were subordinate to Kyungu. But every ruling chief right up the scale, except the Kyungu himself, had also his 622 own great-commoners and people directly subordinate to him. More- ● 643 over the subordination of some chiefs to others and of all to Mbande 565 was a very different thing from the subordination of authorities in a civilized state. It was still above all a religious and ceremonial subordination, but in matters of secular justice and administration there was a very large measure of local autonomy.

Within the chiefdoms the organization of families and villages was more or less[6] the same as that described in the first paper of this series, and need not be further described here.

Among the fiefs of the plain there was another hierarchy, depend- 642 ing not upon seniority of birth but upon priority of arrival in Ngonde. 643 For each important immigrant who entered the country with followers 565 of his own went first to an already established territorial noble, not straight to Mbande; and it was the already established noble, who then acted as his sponsor, took him to Mbande and told the nobles of Ngonde and the Kyungu of his request for land. The normal procedure then was for the nobles of Ngonde to be sent by the Kyungu to arrange with his sponsor where to settle him. And thereafter he ranked, at least for ceremonial purposes, as his sponsor's junior. Thus the territorial noble Kanyenda was junior to his sponsor Mwenekibota, and so on. But no ruling noble was subordinate to any chief save the Kyungu. The nobles, both territorial and of Ngonde, describe themselves as "the great-commoners (*amafumu*) of the Kyungu," likening the relationship of the fiefs and the Kyungu to that of the villages of a single chiefdom and their chief.

The organization of each single fief seems to have resembled in 642 many ways that of a small chiefdom, each was divided into at least two 565 age-villages, so that old men and their sons should live separately; for it was taboo in all the Ngonde plain, as among the Nyakyusa, for father and daughter-in-law ever to meet. Kinship, however, was more emphasized as a reason for living together than in the chiefdoms, and we are told that the inhabitants of the fiefs were usually related, either as kinsmen or affines, to the territorial noble concerned; while the age-villages of a fief had no great-commoners at their head. Otherwise the customs which obtained in the plain, both in the fiefs and the chiefdoms, were, on the whole, homogeneous.

Each of the nobles of Ngonde had a few subject commoners of his own living at Mbande with him, divided up into two age-villages; so help. Mwakasungula led the forces of Ngonde and was the hero of the war; he defeated the Bemba and killed Kyungalo, returning to Ngonde with a host of Bemba captives who were there enslaved.[9] 173

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[6] The climatic difference determines certain differences in the system of land-tenure of Ngonde and of the Nyakyusa, but of these we have made no study.

MIDDLE AND MODERN KYUNGUS

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Line of Ngulunga. *Line of Ngosa.*
Magemo.

Kasyonda.
Mwasangulwa.

Mwangonde.
Mwakasungula.
Mwamlinda.

Ctes Sapan.
Mwaulambo.

(The Europeans arrive 1877).

Mwakalenda
(deposed 1896).

Mwakafwenga (1896-1906).
Mwangalido (1906-1932).
Peter (the reigning Kyungu).

When Mwangonde died Mwakasungula was taken as the Kyungu, but not until Kalonga had refused the position for himself. The first holder of the name "Kalonga," as we have seen, had been killed in civil war. But after his death one of his younger half-brothers, Mbetwa (or Kanyigi), inherited his name and his wives. Now, as the first Kalonga had been the senior son of Mwangonde, so Mbetwa, by inheriting from him, became the senior in his turn. Though much younger than Mwakasungula he ranked above him. But when the nobles of Ngonde tried to install him as the Kyungu "he himself refused the position, he smeared ash on his body and refused, he forswore the position saying 'I do not desire the name of Kyungu; my brother Mwakasungula here was our father's companion for many years and all the medicines of chieftainship are in his possession; how is it that you take me instead 173

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[9] Bemba tradition. The present Bemba chief Mwamba told me that this campaign took place in the reign of the Chitimukulu Cepela. Cepela did not himself go to fight but his brother, Mwamba, did and was defeated by the men of Ngonde. He died of his wounds on his way home.

It thus appears that the country of Mulambia was then just on the boundary between the Bemba sphere of influence and that of Ngonde.

Mwamfishi, younger brother of Mwakasungula, succeeded and abandoning the enclosure at Mbande, went to live by the lake shore.[7] And so yet another step was taken from the traditional religious isolation. His successors returned to Mbande; but the custom of building an enclosure round the houses of the Kyungu was not renewed. 173

In his reign Mwafulilwa, chief of the next tribe to the south of Ngonde, sought aid against the Ngoni and the men of Ngonde responded and won a battle. But the Ngoni then replied with another night raid in which they found Mwamfishi alone in his house and killed him and returned home. Another attack followed before a new Kyungu had been installed, but it was repulsed, "for this time they had come by day!"

"And then the nobles of Ngonde made Owa Sapusi Kyungu; he was a son of Kalambo, a chief of Ngana; for they said that, as so many of the chiefs of Ngalunga had been killed by the Ngoni, they would now take one of their cousins again as the Kyungu." And now at last Ngonde submitted to the Ngoni. Owa Sapusi, with the concurrence of all the chiefs and all the nobles save one[8] sent a tusk of ivory to the Ngoni chief Mbelwa. "And from that time forwards the Ngoni never fought with us again."

A few years later, in 1877, after Owa Sapusi had died and been succeeded by Mwafongo, the Europeans first visited Ngonde. Arab slave traders established themselves there about the same time, and with the struggle between the two races for the possession of Ngonde the modern period begins. 175

3. *RELIGIOUS ELEMENTS (MIDDLE PERIOD).*

The traditional status of the Kyungu had in part a religious basis.[9] The ruling Kyungu and the spirits of his dead predecessors were believed to form one divine company, the anger of any one of whom had terrible effects: while in his own flesh and in some of his possessions magical power was believed to reside. But the Kyungu was not alone in his religious potency, he was but the greatest of many. The nobles of Ngonde and the territorial nobles, the chiefs both great and small, professional rainmakers and doctors, the great-commoners of the villages, heads of families and even ordinary men and women—all alike were believed to have some access to, some dealings with divine or 643 769 781

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[7] Three nobles of Ngonde, in recounting this story, maintained that Mwamfishi was mad.

[8] He was Mwaseisanga, whose story is omitted here for lack of space.

[9] As this paper is concerned only with political institutions no full analysis of the tribal religion of Ngonde is here attempted, only those aspects of it are dealt with which have political significance.

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magical powers. And the faith alike in ancestors and in witchcraft gave to every group of subjects a religious hold over their rulers.

(a) THE THEISTIC ELEMENT.

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Though the early Kyungus had lived on the stony top of Mbande none of them had been buried there, for "the ground was too hard to dig graves in." They and their successors were all buried in the valley, each in a different spot. Over their graves trees were planted and grew up to form a ring of sacred groves round Mbande. Each grove has a name and the Kyungu who is buried there is usually referred to, not by his own name, but by that of the grove where he lies. Thus Kyungu Mwangonde is referred to as "He of Ibeila," Kyungu Wamkomangula as "He of Ipyila," and so on.

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Now drought and widespread sickness were believed to be caused by the anger either of some dead Kyungu or of the living one. "In time of drought they (the nobles of Ngonde) would go to a diviner to enquire who it was who was angry; they would mention all the names of the sacred groves of the Kyungus in turn and he would tell them that it was so and so. So they would tell the (living) Kyungu. And he would give them either a bull or a sheep, together with some beer—they would take one of the pots of beer from his own house, one of the pots which were continually brought by his people as tribute.[7] And he would give them some flour and some cloths also. Then they would go with them into the grove. Now the diviner would have told them that he (the dead Kyungu) was angry because they had omitted (for so long) to build his house. So they would begin by building his house in the grove, they would build a miniature hut with rafters.[8] Next they would kill the beast and hang some of the meat up on a tree—the rest they would eat later outside the grove. Then they would tear up the cloths and fix some of the pieces to the house in the grove—an action which they would explain as 'giving him cloths'. And, finally, they would pour out (some of) the beer and the flour. Nearly always, in time of drought, they would thus build a house in the grove of the Kyungu whom the diviner had mentioned.

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"But occasionally if one of the chiefs had recently insulted the Kyungu, they concluded that it was the living Kyungu himself who was angry. They would go to a diviner and mention all the names of the dead Kyungus, but he would refuse to accept any of them: 'No—no.'

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[7] Vide infra section 4.

[8] This is the custom traditional in the sacred groves of all important chiefs, both in Ngonde and among the Nyakyusa. We have seen it done among the Nyakyusa. The hut which we saw built was between two and three feet high.

6: Wilson,G. (1934-1938)1939 FN17 Ngonde FN17

And at length he would tell them that it was the living Kyungu who 643
was angry because so and so had insulted him. Then there would be 731
no sacrifice in the grove at all, but the nobles of Ngonde would go to 767
the one who had insulted the Kyungu and charge him with it, asking him what he meant by thus killing them all, would not the whole land starve! And so the wrongdoer would take a cow to the Kyungu who, thereupon, would address the nobles of Ngonde, saying: '*If* it was my anger which brought the drought then it will rain (for I am no longer angry). But *if* the rain does not come then it cannot have been my anger, it must have been some one (of the dead Kyungus) whom you forgot to ask about.' *And if, after that*, the rain came soon, then it was not likely that anyone would insult the Kyungu again!

"If, however, it did not rain, then the nobles of Ngonde would approach the Kyungu once more and ask why it had not rained. He would say that he did not know, that he himself was certainly not angry and *they* must have forgotten someone, they had better go and divine again. And so they would; and then the diviner would tell them that it was so and so (one of the dead Kyungus), and they would go and sacrifice in his grove."

Thus the belief in the power of the dead Kyungus, a power in 643
which their living successor participated, was one of the factors of the 769
central political institutions of Ngonde. The Kyungu did not himself 782
sacrifice in the sacred groves but the nobles of Ngonde did so, with
materials provided by him, and from these sacrifices the whole plain 731
was believed to benefit. While to insult the Kyungu was not only treasonable, it was blasphemous, and the whole plain was believed to be cursed with drought or disease in reply. And we have already seen, in the story of Mwakasungula's return from exile,[1] that other prominent members of the royal family also were believed to share this power.

The absence of central political institutions among the Nyakyusa 643
was, as we shall see, mainly due to economic causes; but in part also 731
this difference can be traced to the climatic difference acting upon similar religious faiths. The Nyakyusa had in the Lwembes, the hereditary chiefs of Lubaga, a line of religious paramounts. Chiefs from all over the district sent gifts to them to ask for health and rain. That they never achieved any secular paramountcy at all was mainly because they were poor. But the difference of rainfall was important too. Droughts in Ngonde occurred frequently, and each one made the people remember their Kyungu's power. North of the Songwe droughts were rare and slight.

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[1] p. 27.

643 Nor were rain and health the only blessings which were sought in the sacred groves round Mbande, general fertility, the peace of the
769 country, the absence of rats and the success of the ivory trade were
778 believed to depend in part on the favour of the dead Kyungus. And we have a little evidence that some of these other blessings also were believed to be withheld by the anger of a living Kyungu.

The religious powers of dead and living Kyungus, however, were only believed to be effective in the Ngonde plain; the folk of the hills, certainly, and, as far as we know, the chiefdoms of the [illegible] and Kameme also, were unaffected by them. And this fact is correlated with the slighter secular hold which Mbande had over the hills as compared with the plain.

769 Two notable religious rituals of the plain must now be mentioned. It was customary, first, to clear out the ashes ([illegible]) each
776 year after the break of the rains. In traditional belief the spirits of the ancestors, whether of chiefs or of commoners, were closely associated with the fires in the houses of their descendants; and so it was only by clearing out the old fires regularly that the spirits and their potential anger could be driven away. Every religious ritual which deals with the ancestors, whether in Ngonde or among the Nyakyusa, has the function of driving them away. For, while the Christians believe that sustained communion with God may be a blessed state, the pagans in Ngonde and among the Nyakyusa believe that sustained communion
[787] with the ancestral spirits is always terrible and dangerous; prophecy may flow from it, but if the communion is not broken, if it continues too long, then evil will result; and prophecy is nearly always prophecy of evil. In pagan belief the spirits of the dead come constantly to "brood" on man and his works and have constantly to be satisfied and driven away by ritual.

"Always they used to clear out the ashes at the new year, at the first hoeing, at the break of the rains in December. They feared that death and disease would spread through the land if they continued living with the old fires, that the spirits in the ground, both the spirits of chiefs and of commoners, would be angry; let them drive the spirits away and hoe in peace. They always remembered so to do each new year; for the old men used to keep these things in mind continually, they never forgot. The Kyungu would summon the whole country to clear out the ashes; and then they would hoe in peace. And at other times too, if prophecy came on someone, they would clear out the ashes again."

The nobles of Ngonde approached the Kyungu and he gave the order to clear out the ashes; messages were sent to the great chiefs and the senior territorial nobles of the plain, and they told their juniors. A sacrifice was made in one of the sacred groves of the Kyungus and all fires in the whole Ngonde plain were put out. And then "all the chiefs from every country near Mbande and the nobles and all the great-commoners and all the ordinary men and the women too went to Kyimbwe." At Kyimbwe, which is a cross-roads in the bush, they threw away the ashes of their old fires; while those few people who could not get to Kyimbwe threw them away near their own houses on the same day as the others. At Kyimbwe new fire was made with fire-sticks by the nobles of Ngonde and distributed to the whole plain in order. Great chiefs and senior nobles took it first and passed it to their juniors, chiefs passed to great-commoners, and in each group the common people got it from their own ruling noble or their own great-commoner. 768 776

And then, later in the year when the first maize and the first pumpkin leaves were ready to eat, an elaborate first-fruit ceremony was carried out. The first-fruits were offered by the nobles of Ngonde in the grove of the previous Kyungu, the one who had last died. "Then the great chiefs would do so next—Kalinga, Mwakasungula, Mwansimba, Katumba and the chiefs of Ngana also, each in his own sacred grove (i.e. at the grave of his own predecessor in the title). . . . . . . And then after them everyone, both chiefs and people, each at his father's grave. All offered first-fruits to their own spirits. And finally they would eat themselves, each with his chief wife. But beforehand they would not eat for fear of angering the spirits."

These two rituals concerned the plain alone; the nobles and chiefs of the hills are said to have had similar rituals of their own but they were not synchronized with or dependent upon those of the plain.

In time of tribal war also the Kyungu and the nobles of Ngonde led the people in prayer. All chiefs and nobles were summoned from the plain and the great ones entered the Kyungu's house to receive their instructions: "When he had finished speaking he would tell them to go to pray. So they would leave his house and gather all together, all chiefs and men, and pray. The premier noble of Ngonde would begin, asking each of the sacred groves of the Kyungus in turn to bless them in the fight. And then the great chiefs would pray after them" (each addressing his own predecessors in his title). The territorial nobles did not pray, for it was the royal family alone whose spirits were then addressed. Here again it was the plain alone that was concerned. 643 565 732 726

Now this organization of religious ritual in the Ngonde plain was both a factor of and itself determined by the general political structure. We shall see in later sections how many details of the secular power of Mbande and of the lesser authorities were dependent upon their religious functions. But the reverse is equally true. 776 Among the Nyakyusa, where the hierarchy of chiefs had scarcely any secular content at all, the organisation of religious ritual was far less elaborate. Cattle were sent to Lubaga by the other chiefs to be sacrificed for rain and health; but the "throwing out of the ashes" was done by each chiefdom separately; there was no general first-fruit ritual at all;[1] while, as war was never waged on a tribal basis, prayers and sacrifices for military success were always undertaken by each warring chiefdom alone.

643 633 565 769 754 Besides the Kyungu the great chiefs of Ngonde also were believed to be able to avert local droughts and misfortunes in their districts by offerings to their own immediate ancestors; and the lesser chiefs likewise and the territorial nobles—each in his own little area. While among the territorial nobles, the original owners of the land had wider powers. It will be remembered that to them the first Kyungu is said to have given head-cloths and asked for their prayers. Sometimes people would prophesy future misfortune "at Kasindile", or "at Kaluma" or "at Ilumba," or would prophesy of present misfortunes that such was their source. Then the territorial noble concerned[2] would be formally visited by the nobles of Ngonde, and he and they together would offer sacrifice to his ancestors on behalf of all Ngonde.

778 776 782 And then also there were sacred lagoons near the lake—Ntibala, Kambwe, Kibonde, Malale and Karindi. They were associated not with ancestral spirits at all but with a vaguely defined supreme deity named Mbamba. And beside them also prayers and sacrifices were made from time to time by the nobles of Ngonde.

771 643 585 622 Over these other spiritual powers we need not linger, save to notice one most significant fact. The participation by the Kyungu in the divinity of his ancestors was no isolated phenomenon in Ngonde. The head of every family in the country, whether of chiefs or commoners, was similarly placed; in his own family and, in the case of a chief or noble, in his own area too, he was both a priest and a demigod; he dealt with the spirits and by virtue of his relation to them shared their powers; his anger could curse. The Kyungus were but the greatest of many divinities. And thus there was in theistic ritual a high degree of local and family autonomy; local or family misfortunes

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[1] Particular people among the Nyakyusa carried it out; reigning chiefs, senior great-commoners, prophets, and any person whose birth was held to be due to magical treatment of a previously barren woman. But only they.

[2] Mwene-kasindile, Mwene-kaluma, Mwene-Ilumba etc.

were dealt with by the local rulers or by the family-heads, not by the central authorities. It was only occasionally that general fears or misfortunes turned all men's thoughts together to Mbande. 771 643 565 153

Now the great-commoners of every chief were believed to have independent access to his ancestral spirits and this gave them a spiritual hold over him. If they compared him too unfavourably with his predecessors then, it was believed, those predecessors might hear and afflict him in various ways. And so it was also with the nobles of Ngonde and the reigning Kyungu. But as this belief was intimately linked with the belief in witchcraft it will be more conveniently analysed in that context.[1]

(b) THE MAGICAL ELEMENT.

789 643 Magic (the belief that certain particular objects, events, words or actions, involving particular people in particular situations, possessed in themselves an extraordinary power) was an essential ingredient of the old pagan religion of Ngonde. While the greatest magical object in the country was, traditionally, the body of the Kyungu. And the fact that the central political authority of Ngonde was so largely vested in the nobles of Ngonde was due above all to their responsibility for controlling this magical object in the public interest.

789 643 784 753 If the Kyungu cut himself, and more particularly if his blood fell to the ground, then it was the duty of the nobles of Ngonde to kill him, lest the whole land be afflicted with disease; and if he was ill likewise. "They considered that if his blood fell to the ground that was his life falling. And they likened him to a god, considering it taboo for a god to be wounded; they thought that if his blood fell to the ground it would turn into a sickness and all the people would die. And so, when the Kyungu was wounded, they thought it best to put him out of the way and start afresh with a new one. They thought it taboo for him to have even the tiniest wound on his body. And it was equally taboo for him to fall ill; everyone else, it was believed, would fall ill too; it was better to put him out of the way so that the people should keep well."

789 643 834 In consequence of this belief elaborate precautions were taken to maintain the Kyungu's health. Sexual impurity was believed to be magically dangerous to health in many ways and so the Kyungu, above all men, must be guarded from it. It was not considered safe even for his own wives to cook his food, lest one of them touch it during a menstrual period, and so young boys who had not yet reached puberty

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[1] Vide infra section 3 (c).

787 contact is relaxed. One of the reasons for killing most of his sons, as we
643 have seen, was to lessen the danger of his wives committing adultery
834 with them, for adultery was a magical cause of sickness. His wives themselves were jealously guarded.

643 Then again a Kyungu might not wade across the river lest the act
789 of doing so should magically bring a deluge of rain from heaven, he
834 had always to be carried.

And the breath and the growing parts of a Kyungu's body—the
788 hair and nails and the constantly replaced mucus of his nose—were
643 believed to be magically connected with the fertility of the Ngonde
764 plain. When he was killed his nostrils were stopped so that he was
826 buried "with breath in his body"; while portions of his hair and nails and of his nasal mucus were taken from him beforehand and buried later by the nobles of Ngonde in the black mud near the river. This action was believed to "close up the land, to keep it rich and heavy and fertile, as it was when he himself lived in it."

787 Now the Lwembe of Lubaga had equally magical flesh, but the
other chiefs of Ngonde and the Nyakyusa had not. They could wade
623 across rivers, fall ill and be wounded without endangering their sub-
826 jects. But of all alike the breath and the hair and nails had a magical importance. Every ruling chief in both areas had his nostrils stopped by his great-commoners when nearing death, while portions of his hair and nails[1] were taken from him when living and buried after his death in a special place. The hair and nails were held to be magically connected through their growth with the growth of crops. "You see these nails of yours," said the man who explained the symbolism to us, "if you cut them do they not grow again?" (They do.) "And where does their growth come from? Does it not come from within the body?" (It does.) "Well then that is the reason, the great-commoners take power of growth from the chief in the form of his nails and hair."

Besides his magical body the Kyungu had a host of magical
781 possessions. There was the iron stool *Kisumbi* on which he was set at
782 his accession; once he had sat upon it he could not flee the position or he would die. There was the drum *Mwenekelela* whose note was believed to be heard by the most distant of the Kyungu's subjects. When it was beaten "all the little nobles from afar off would hear and obey the summons; they would all come together. Then we would tell them that so and so had not brought any ivory for a long time! Then they would come with tusks as tribute, to pay worship to the Kyungu." But sometimes the drum would refuse to sound and they would kill a

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[1] We were only told about the nasal mucus in the case of the Kyungu.

sheep over it; if it still refused they would kill a cow; and if it still 781 refused then they would kill a human being, the child of a commoner. 782

Then there was *Malima*, a porous piece of iron "like a mouth organ," which the Kyungu used to make rain. If he held it up out of 789 doors with its holes clear, so that he could see right through them, then it would be fine, but if he stopped up the holes and then held it up out of doors the sky would at once become overcast and rain would fall. And there were his zebra tails set in horn handles, with medicine in the handles, which his people carried to war to give them victory; and his spear *Kamina*, and so on.

There is no sharp distinction in the pagan religion of Ngonde and 788 the Nyakyusa between its magical and its theistic elements. Some- 778 times the magical, sometimes the theistic predominates, but often they are inextricably mixed. In the prayers and sacrifices to the ancestors magic enters at every turn: particular people, a particular place, particular materials and gestures, particular words are held to be essential to their success. Nor are the more permanent and obvious magical objects always free from divine associations. When we asked, for example, why the drum Mwenekalesa had needed occasional human sacrifices to make it work properly we got this answer: "It was because their god[6] had given this drum to the Kyungu saying: 'I alone am war, there is none other war save me.' It (the human sacrifice) was like a prayer. The refusal of Mwenekalesa to sound was like the prophetic fit that falls on people (from the spirits) commanding sacrifice (to the graves)." Or, again, it is clear from our evidence that the living Kyungu's power of causing a drought was believed to arise both from his relationship to the spirits and from his possession and use of *Malima* together. His magical body and possessions, being inherited from his predecessors, were part of his relationship to them.

Now one of the material facts which had magical significance in 789 Ngonde was that of general social status. The magical powers of the 554 Kyungu not only contributed to the general political authority of 643 Mbande but were, in part, magically derived from it. Only the greatest in the land could possess the greatest magic without endangering his life. There were, for example, a number of chiefs' medicines (*ifingila*), and if a chief used a medicine which was above his status then it was believed that, on meeting the Kyungu or some great chief, to whose

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[6] The phrase "their god" (*Kyala gwabo*) is normally used by pagans nowadays to mean the ancestral spirits, or some one among them. The term *Kyala*, which originally referred only to one of the most influential Nyakyusa spirits, has now been identified either with the Christian God or with divinity in general throughout all this area.

781 status is rightly belonged, he would at once fall down dead. And many
534 stories are still told of such happenings in the past.
643 And besides this there was the fact that the Kyungu, being the richest man in Ngonde and in the most intimate contact with the ivory traders, could secure medicines from a distance, which had a greater reputation than local ones.

781 But, as in the theistic aspect of the religion of Ngonde there was
771 considerable local and family autonomy, so also was there in the magical
554 aspect; and here there was individual autonomy also. Lesser rulers had lesser magic than Mbande, but still it was magic. Ordinary chiefs, for instance, had magically filled zebra tails which gave their people military success. And every individual could go to a doctor and exchange a little of his surplus food for magic. Success in love and hunting, in warfare and legal disputes, good crops and good health—all alike, it was believed, magic could give.

(c). THE ELEMENT OF WITCHCRAFT.

754 Both in Ngonde and among the Nyakyusa it was believed that cer-
622 tain commoners had snakes in their stomachs which gave them the power
624 of witchcraft (*ubulozi* or *amanga*[4]) and among those who had this power were the great-commoners of every chiefdom. Normally a ruling chief was spiritually protected by his great-commoners from the malicious attacks of other witches, but, if he did wrong, then the great-commoners, so it was held, would cease to protect him and join in the attack.

Now in many circumstances the great-commoners' power of witchcraft and the power of the chief's dead predecessors were believed to act together. The anger of witches and that of the ancestors were sharply distinguished in theory, but in practice they often coincided. The great-commoners, for example, not only had the power of bewitching their chief but also of appealing to his predecessors to punish him for wrong-doing; and on particular occasions they were often believed to do both at once.[5] And the nobles of Ngonde had similar powers in relation to the Kyungu.[6]

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[4] *Ubulozi* is normally used when the act of witchcraft is disapproved of and *amanga* when it is approved of by the speaker.

[5] A point of considerable theoretical interest is raised by the repeated statements of our best informants on these matters that it was because they were witches that the great-commoners had this power of influencing the chief's ancestors, that they went to the chief's ancestors in their capacity of witches and in the manner of witchcraft (i.e. by means of the snakes in their stomachs). But our evidence on this point is not yet conclusive.

[6] So we were told when we put the question; but it was never volunteered. It was the hold which the nobles of Ngonde had over the Kyungu in consequence of his magical flesh which was the more emphasized.

These twin religious powers of the great-commoners in relation 754
to their chief (or of the nobles of Ngonde in relation to the Kyungu) 622
were important for the balance of the constitution, for they provided a
most effective check upon the actions of the chiefs. If a chief kept 624
within the bounds of constitutional usage then any illness that he had
would be attributed by the diviners to some such cause, as the 642
infidelity of his wives or the breach of a taboo; but if he broke some constitutional usage then that would be taken to be the cause of his next illness; the great-commoners, it would be held, were angry and so had made him ill.

It is hardly necessary to stress the local and individual autonomy implicit in the faith in witchcraft. Not only were the great-commoners as a group believed to have an irresistible power through their witchcraft over their chief, but so were the great-commoner and the leading witches of every village believed to have an irresistible power over other individuals within that village. And in both cases their powers were strictly limited, save exceptionally, by the bounds of chiefdom or village. Moreover witches did not always act as a group, an individual witch might maliciously cause another individual to fall ill. In all this the political hierarchy was irrelevant. But it was not irrelevant in dealing with accusations of malicious witchcraft; there proof rested with the poison ordeal and a journey had to be made to a great chief or a leading noble.

4. *ECONOMIC ELEMENTS (MIDDLE PERIOD).*

We have suggested in the previous section that the traditional religious paramountcy of the Kyungu and his nobles of Ngonde was an important factor of their secular power. But comparison with the Nyakyusa shows us that their control of wealth was equally important. The religious paramountcy furnished a mould into which the stiffening stream of wealth could run and there be minted into the form of sovereignty. Much of the wealth which reached Mbande did not stay there; it was passed back piecemeal to the local rulers of Ngonde, stamped with the divine impress of the Kyungu.

(a) *THE INCOME OF MBANDE AND OTHER AUTHORITIES.*

Now the traditional income of Mbande consisted of ivory, food, 643
labour, slaves and cattle. Of ivory the Kyungu had a semi-monopoly in
the plain and received tribute from the territorial nobles in the hills. 652
Food was brought to him by the chiefs and territorial nobles of the plain, who also, with their men, hoed his public gardens (*imilasa*). Slaves and cattle accrued to him from tribal wars and from his offending

643 652 subjects. The great bulk of this income was employed for public purposes, but no exact line can be drawn between his public and his personal expenditure[1].

643 651 224 "The right tusk of an elephant was called the royal, the left the common tusk. All royal tusks were the Kyungu's but common tusks belonged to the hunter who killed the elephant. Whenever a hunter here in the Ngonde plain killed an elephant he would take the royal tusk to his own chief (or noble) who would then tell him to bear it to the lord of the country, and so he would take it to the Kyungu. But in the distant hills the local ruler[2] would keep the royal tusks and so cheat the Kyungu. He might come to visit him from time to time, bringing two or three tusks only; and in that case the Kyungu would not claim the others from him. If, however, the Kyungu had heard that many elephants had been killed in so and so's country, and if no subsequent visit had been made to him, he would get angry and send a messenger, and then the territorial noble would come in haste to visit him. But very many tusks they stole and never brought." Whether the commoner from the plain who brought the ivory to Mbande received a gift from the Kyungu in return we do not know; he was not conducted into the sacred enclosure, and he left the tusk with the nobles of Ngonde. But the distant territorial nobles who brought ivory were royally entertained, and even entered the presence of the Kyungu.

Now the sanction for bringing to Mbande the royal tusks of the plain was a moral one, arising from religious faith. It was believed that any huntsman in the plain who had killed an elephant and kept both tusks, instead of taking the right to his own chief or noble and thence on to Mbande, would never kill another; for the spirits of the dead Kyungus would be angry and frustrate his best efforts. It was believed that this would be so even though the living authorities at Mbande had been successfully hoodwinked; it was impossible to hoodwink the dead.

But in the distant hills the sanction was entirely different. The Kyungu and his ancestors were only local divinities, they were only believed to control the fate of the plain. In the hills what was feared was military force. If Nthalile or Mwenewenya refused to obey a summons to Mbande then the Kyungu would order his sons, the chiefs, to go and "burn him out" for insolence[3]. The sanction of force, however, was not the only reason for their acquiescence; it was profitable also for distant nobles to bring ivory to Mbande, since they were given in return valuable gifts of cloth which they could not easily get elsewhere. And besides this it is said that "they desired the Kyungu's favour and to have their importance recognised by him." 643 651 224

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[1] No such line can be drawn in England either. We distinguish the King's Civil List from the rest of the budget, but then the state which His Majesty keeps has a public significance.

[2] i.e. the territorial noble.

[3] *Vide infra* section 5 (a).

Of the tusks which were retained by the hunters in the plain a good many were bought up afterwards by the Kyungu or by the chiefs in return for cloths or cattle or slaves.

Food was brought both by the chiefs and the territorial nobles of the plain, either on their own initiative or in answer to a royal command; and sometimes the less distant nobles of the hills brought food also. Mwenemisuku, for example, was called upon for the beans for which his country is still famous to-day. But, as the following quotation shows, not all the food brought reached the personal possession of the Kyungu. 643 651

"In the old days the nobles of Ngonde had most cunning ways, they would send a message to some territorial noble by the lake to say that the Kyungu desired fish and he must bring him some. Whereupon the noble would bring maybe ten or twenty baskets of fish. He would bring it to the nobles of Ngonde, who would then go and inform the Kyungu that so and so had come bringing fish. And the Kyungu would bid them thank him and tell them to give him a hoe. They would do so and the visiting noble would go home. And then the nobles of Ngonde would bring two baskets of fish in to the Kyungu, dividing the remainder among themselves.

"So likewise they would send to Mwenemisuku for beans and to other nobles for maize or millet; and always they would tell Kyungu of these nobles' arrival; but he would never see what they had brought with them! Sometimes the Kyungu might tell them to send one away without any gift, to another he might give something, just as the fancy took him. But always the nobles of Ngonde would keep the bulk of what had been brought for themselves and bring a little of it only into Kyungu's house. When sending thus for food they sent the *valukuta* who were their messengers."

And the lesser authorities likewise, great chiefs, local chiefs and territorial nobles, took a certain tribute from their own subjects; they could not take the royal tusks, but they could and did take food. Every ruler in Ngonde (and also among the Nyakyusa) had the power of sending at need to any of his subjects and taking some food—bananas, milk, beer and so on. This power was correlated with the view that the local rulers, in relation to their people, were the ultimate owners of the land which their people used. And so also in the relation of the Kyungu with the local rulers, the view that he had given (or allowed them to retain) their land was correlated with the tribute of food.

643 652 The gardens of the Kyungu were divided traditionally into public (*imilasa*) and private ones (*imigunda gya masano*). The produce of the first was mainly devoted to the entertainment of important guests—chiefs, territorial nobles and the ivory traders from over the lake. That of the second to the personal needs of the Kyungu and his household. 643 651 The public gardens were hoed and weeded by the great chiefs and the nobles of the Ngonde plain with their subordinates and followers, the private ones by the nobles of Ngonde with theirs.

The hoeing of his public gardens by the chiefs and nobles of the plain was as intimately connected with the religious status of the Kyungu as was the bringing of royal tusks to him, for the belief in his rain-making powers provided a moral sanction for it. Drought and disease, as we have seen, were often attributed to the displeasure of the living Kyungu; and the failure of some ruler to bring his people to work the public gardens was, so we were told, the most usual way of displeasing him. The wealth and the divinity of the Kyungu were inextricably linked. Nor without these public gardens could the lucrative ivory trade have been maintained. In the primitive world of Ngonde there were no "purely business relations;" tributaries and buyers alike had to be royally feasted.

643 651 565 622 In the hoeing of the public gardens the political hierarchy of Ngonde was made evident, for each great chief came separately to hoe, accompanied both by the local chiefs of his own house and by those territorial nobles who lived near him. At an appropriate time either the great chief or one of his noble neighbours would suggest going to Mbande to hoe, and the former would then summon all his local chiefs. But he could not summon the nobles; with them it was a polite arrangement between equals. "When they went to hoe for the Kyungu it might be a neighbouring noble and not the great chief at all who made the first suggestion; and then the two of them would go together with their followers. For the nobles are not subjects of the great chiefs but only of the Kyungu."

651 241 476 273 The main crop grown in the public gardens was millet (*amalesi*) for beer. And at some time during the year all the chiefs and nobles[1] who had brought men to hoe[2] them were summoned to taste "the beer of the *mulasa*." So we see that, in one aspect, the hoeing of the public gardens of the Kyungu was but an extension on a large scale of the

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[1] It is clear from our notes that each chief and noble brought to this beer-drink some of his people; but it is not clear whether he brought all those who had worked or only the more important among them.

[2] I speak of "hoeing" and "men." It is fairly certain that the women also came to weed afterwards and that they participated in the beer. We omitted, however, to find this out.

ordinary custom of hoeing parties which is still followed by every 651
chief and commoner in this whole area. Every man, two or three times 241
a year, invites his neighbours to hoe for him and rewards them with a 476
beer-drink in the evening. Where the hoeing of the Kyungu's public 273
gardens differed from this custom was in the religious sanction behind it and in its political organization.

After the local chiefs had finished the *mulasa* for the Kyungu they 651
would next return and hoe a small garden for their great chief who had
led them to Mbande. But in this the territorial nobles took no part. 565
Such gardens were not called *milasa* and there was no distinction made between them and the great chief's private ones. For this custom also there was a moral sanction; for the great chiefs, we remember, also participated in divinity. "If his people forgot to hoe for Mwakasungula then perhaps a little local epidemic of some kind would break out and the diviners, when questioned, would attribute it to their forgetfulness. Or perhaps a prophetic fit would fall on some one and he would tell them to go and hoe (or they would rue it!)"

And, still lower in the hierarchy, among a group of chiefs who were half-brothers, the senior chief used sometimes to summon his juniors to bring their men and hoe; but "their acquiescence depended on their friendship for him"; it seems to have had no effective moral sanction.

The private gardens of the Kyungu were traditionally very small 643
indeed, for the constant income of food from the plain made them all but 651
unnecessary. Such as they were, they were worked by the people of Mbande, i.e. the nobles of Ngonde and their followers. The wives of the Kyungu lived like ladies and had all the normal work of a woman, including weeding, done for them.

The income of the Kyungu in slaves and cattle cannot be understood 643
save in the context of judicial procedure and warfare with which we have 652
not yet dealt[1].

The income of Mbande reached others besides the Kyungu and his wives. We have already seen how the nobles of Ngonde took their share of the food which was brought in; and some of it they gave to their messengers, the *valukuta*. Neither the nobles of Ngonde nor the messengers, according to the present Kyungu, used to have any large gardens of their own; they also were maintained at the public expense. And the nobles of Ngonde shared also in the proceeds of the ivory.

With the exception of a pile of tusks upon which the Kyungu slept, 439
most of the ivory which reached Mbande, from the time of Mwangonde

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[1] *Vide infra* sections 5 and 6.

and beer; their position depended upon doing so. Up and down the hierarchy the stream of wealth travelled and this stream, in its ebb and flow, was the lifeblood of the old constitution. 652 431

(c) *THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE IVORY TRADE.*

Now it was the scarce and valuable cloths derived from the ivory trade which enabled Mbande to bind the subordinate chiefs and nobles to it in secular matters. Lubaga, lacking this wealth, had no such secular power. But it is very easy to exaggerate the secular power which Mbande had. Personal loyalty to the Kyungu and the great chiefs was enforced throughout Ngonde,[1] the nobles of Ngonde participated in the selection of territorial nobles and great chiefs,[2] tribal war was organized from Mbande,[3] but that was all. In everyday life the sovereignty of the local rulers was scarcely limited. Civil war was endemic in Ngonde,[4] and secular justice had no central organization[5]. 643 ● 439

The central power of Mbande rested on the combination of divine kingship with wealth derived from the ivory-trade. But both in religious and economic matters there was a very high degree of local autonomy. We have already discussed the local autonomy in religion[6] and must now discuss it in the economic sphere.

The economic relations of men in the middle period of Ngonde's history were largely confined to the little local groups of chiefdom and fief. Subsistence agriculture was practised by each family, with the assistance of village neighbours and of a few friends and relatives who normally lived in the same chiefdom or fief. Marriage, with all the exchanges of cattle and food which marriage involved, was usually a local matter also; men only occasionally went beyond the chiefdom or the fief for their wives; while of the few specialised craftmen, such as smiths, a representative was usually to be found in each such local group. Economic links between the local groups existed: men moved from one chiefdom or fief to another leaving relatives behind, some marriages took place across the local boundaries, famous craftmen or doctors attracted clients from far afield. But these links were far fewer in number than those which obtained between the members of each separate local group. 433

And the ivory trade added little to the economic links between the local groups. It involved no tribal organization of elephant hunts, or anything of the kind; it touched the common people only slightly. Commoners and chiefs however did occasionally exchange tusks either 439

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[1] *Vide infra* 5 (a)
[2] *Vide infra* 5 (b)
[3] *Vide infra* 6 (b)
[4] *Vide infra* 6 (a)
[5] *Vide infra* 5 (c)
[6] *Vide supra* 3

687 profitable to them and it increased their sense of importance. And Mbande further maintains that the nobles of Ngonde themselves went to their funerals and took part in the selection of their successors.[1] But, as we did not travel to the hills to get their own account, the official account of Mbande must be accepted with caution.

The details of these punitive expeditions, however, were, in all except the occasion, similar to those of a tribal war and will be discussed in that context.

(b) *CONSTITUTIONAL LAW: SUCCESSION.*

643 But the punishment of traitors, insubordinate juniors and tribute-defaulters is only, as it were, the negative side of the maintenance of a constitution. It is also necessary to have some orderly machinery by which the places of authority can be filled. And Mbande derived part of its own authority from its constitutional functions in the appointment of its subordinates.

In the middle period, with which we are dealing, none of the great offices in Ngonde were filled in accordance with purely genealogical right. The Kyunguship and the great chiefdoms passed, on the death of their holders, to men constitutionally chosen from the appropriate families; they did not necessarily pass to the holders' own immediate heirs. And so it was also with the fiefs, both in the plain and the hills. In filling the local chiefdoms the strictly genealogical principle was more emphasised in theory but even there it was often in practice modified.

The Kyungu might be taken from any of the great houses of Ngonde which traced their descent either to Mwangonde or Kasyombe, with the one exception of the house of Kalonga. It was usual to take one of the great chiefs themselves, it was essential to take a generous ruling chief. The traditional procedure, which still continues, is as follows: "When a Kyungu dies it is the nobles of Ngonde, those who live near Kyungu, who initiate the discussion of a successor. They confer among themselves and agree that so and so of such and such a house is a suitable man and should be caught as the Kyungu. When they have thus conferred they then call a meeting of all the nobles (of the plain) and discuss the matter again with them. And then, when all are agreed, they go and tell Kalonga and discuss it all over again with him, because he is the senior of all." ("Has Kalonga the power of vetoing their agreed choice, then?" we asked). "Yes, if he considers that the man they suggest is unsuitable he says so and the discussion begins again. So then they catch the chosen man. In the old days they used to go with him to the hill Mbande but nowadays they go to the Government

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[1] *Vide infra*, p. 54.

and say 'This is the new Kyungu.' And when they make obeisance to 643
Kyungu all the rest, both the chiefs and nobles, fall to the ground, but
Kalonga alone remains seated, for he is the senior of the whole line."

In the succession to the great chiefdoms there was formerly a 622
difference of procedure in the two royal lines, that of Ngelenge and that
of Ngana. When a great chief of Ngelenge died, the nobles of Ngonde 565
were sent by the Kyungu, both to the funeral and, later, to assist in the selection of a successor. "With the great chiefs of Ngelenge it is we, the nobles of Ngonde, who have always caught their successors. We catch Kalonga, Mwakasungula Mwambelo, Katamba (or Mwenitete) and Mwambungu.[1] But we have never gone to catch the successors of the lesser chiefs, nor used we to catch the chiefs of Ngana either, for they are of the female line.... When a great chief (of Ngelenge) has died we go and consult secretly with the great-commoners and then, if one of the dead man's immediate heirs is suitable we catch him, but if not we may pass them over and take someone else who is, it maybe, quite junior in that house but who entertains his people generously. Him we hit with a dry stick saying, we have you, you are M—(title of the great chief) now! .... The chosen man we set upon a stool; this is the ancient custom. We always (used to) select mature men for these positions, not just youths[2]."

"The great titles among the Ngana chiefs" we were told "are five: 554
Mwenengubwe, Mwafongo, Kalambo, Kilupula and Mwabulambo. In the old days the nobles of Ngonde did not go to catch them, because they were only the female line; they would summon their great-commoners to Mbande and enquire who was to succeed and, when they had discussed it with them, tell them to go and catch the selected man to be the new chief. Then the great-commoners would return and discuss it with the other four great chiefs of Ngana, after which they would catch the chosen man."

The qualities looked for both in a Kyungu and a great chief were 643
the same, with one exception: he had to be "a ruling chief....
elderly man....one who was respectful in his manner to the leading 622
commoners.....a wise chief who knew how to feed his people." The 554
emphasis on generosity in entertainment is most striking, every informant stresses it above all other qualities. Generosity and the possesion of abundance of food were the supreme traditional marks of a chief both in Ngonde, among the Nyakusa and in many other parts of Africa as

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[1] The house of Mwambungu was originally a junior branch of that of Katamba.

[2] Mwenendeka and Kyabinga. Other informants make it clear that not only the nobles of Ngonde but the territorial nobles of the plain also participate in the selection of these great chiefs.

643 622 554 well. The one additional qualification of a great chief was bravery in war; the Kyungus never fought and so in their case bravery was less important.

565 The succession of the nobles of Ngonde, of the territorial nobles of the plain and of the territorial nobles of the hills was similar to that of the great chiefs: the nobles of Ngonde themselves went and discussed with the leading men of the dead noble which member of his family to appoint in his place; and the immediate heirs were passed over if unsuitable.[1] But in the case of the territorial nobles the successor of the original noble sponsor or protégé of that family also took part in the discussions. It will be remembered that there was an, at least ceremonial, hierarchy among the territorial nobles, depending upon the priority of their arrival in Ngonde and the fact that a later arrival was always introduced at Mbande by some established noble and given land near him. And the relationship then established between the fiefs continued to manifest itself at every subsequent succession.

"Mwenelupembe was a Nyika but then he came here to Ngonde and the Kyungu gave him land by the lake. Then later Mwalugali came from Mwela, and Mwenelupembe told the Kyungu that he had come; whereupon the Kyungu sent the nobles of Ngonde with Mwenelupembe to give him land. And still, when a Mwalugali dies it is Mwenelupembe and the nobles of Ngonde who discuss with his men the choice of a successor. Then, still later, Kasembe came to Mwalugali who told Mwenelupembe, who told the Kyungu. Kasembe came without men; he came from Mwela like Mwalugali but was not a kinsman of his. So the Kyungu said that Kasembe should build with Mwalugali. Then last of all came Songwe with some of his relatives, to Mwalugali. Now Songwe was a kinsman of Kasembe's. Mwalugali told Mwenelupembe who, in his turn, told the Kyungu.———And the Kyungu decided that as Songwe and Kasembe were kinsmen they should be given land together, but a little apart from Mwalugali. And still they are associated, all four, and when one of them dies the other three come to the funeral and together send the message to the Kyungu. And the three of them consult with the nobles of Ngonde about the choice of a successor; they, the nobles of Ngonde and the relatives of the dead noble consult together,

622 The succession to the ordinary local chiefdoms of Ngonde was, like

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[1] Later in their conversation it was made clear, however, that, in the case of the more distant territorial nobles, both in the plain to the north and in the hills to the west, it was only to the successors of the most important ones that the nobles of Ngonde went in person. When a lesser noble died then the Kyungu would send to the great chief who was nearest (to Kilupula in the west and to Kalambo in the north), asking him to send men of his own to "catch" the successor.

622 that to the independent chiefdoms of the Nyakyusa, tied up with the custom of the "coming out" (*uvusoka*). In both areas the two senior sons of the two great wives of each ruling chief were publicly "brought out" about a generation after the "coming out" of their father; and from that time forwards the old chief went into semi-retirement while they divided his country between them. If it was a big country both of them would very likely be prosperous rulers; if it was not then one of them—the most generous rather than the senior—would probably in time attract the bulk of the people to him, leaving his half-brother little but the name of a chief.

622 554 Now both in Ngonde and among the Nyakyusa there was a certain tendency for other sons of an old chief, besides the two senior who were formally "brought out," to collect a few men round them and set up chiefdoms of their own. But it was in Ngonde that this tendency was most marked. And so today the chiefdoms of Ngonde are smaller than those of the Nyakyusa, for they have been far more split up. The reason for this difference appears to have lain in the very great prestige of Mbande, and so of all kinsmen of the Kyungu. There is a saying current in Ngonde: "Every son of the Kyungu is a chief." But no such saying is current among the Nyakyusa. And thus it has happened that often in Ngonde the men of an old chief have been divided up among four or five sons, not among two only; and the most successful of these four or five has not always been one of the two senior. If a junior son was a more generous feaster of men than his seniors he would die a greater chief than they, for many of their followers would leave them and join him. So we see that the formal passing over of a mean or poverty-stricken chief in favour of a richer or more generous junior, in the selection of the great chiefs, was but an extension of a principle which already worked less formally among the little local chiefs themselves.

428 And, further, it must be emphasized that the principles of succession to high office in Ngonde and the principles by which property is inherited there were, and still are, wholly distinct. When the immediate heir of a Kyungu or a great chief is passed over in the succession he does not thereby lose his inheritance. The wives and property of the dead man are indisputably his. Full-brothers are the first heirs and after them either sons or half-brothers, in accordance with different circumstances; while a sister's son can only inherit if all near patrilineal kinsmen are either still in their infancy or already dead.

643 622 554 The traditional laws of succession to the Kyungushlp, the great chiefdoms and the fiefs of Ngonde thus present the student with a most interesting balance between different principles: heredity was modified

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by election; the election was made by the central power and the leaders of the local populations in agreement; mature wisdom, courtesy and generosity in the use of wealth were all essential qualifications for office. In arranging the succession to the local chiefdoms, on the other hand, the central power of Mbande took no active part. All these chiefs were related to the Kyungu, who was informed of every "coming out" as a matter of form, but that was all. In the case of these local chiefs the hereditary principles were modified only by popular choice, acting gradually over a number of years.

(c) *COMMON LAW.*

692 We must beware of letting our civilized preconceptions blind us to the fact that, though some common law must be maintained in every society, it is not always necessary for it to be maintained by a central political authority. In the primitive world of Ngonde Mbande played little or no direct part in the maintenance of common law; the great chiefs, the local chiefs, the territorial nobles, the great-commoners of the villages played a larger part; but even they usually left whole areas of law untouched to be enforced by the common people among themselves. The laws of marriage for example, seem to have been normally enforced by the two families of each married couple concerned, with the advice and assistance of their neighbours.

In a primitive society a man is far more helplessly dependent upon his relatives, friends and neighbours than he is in our own. He cannot normally escape them, for his world is so small. And this fact enables them often to constrain him effectively without calling in the aid of any constituted political authority whatever. Moreover even when it is necessary to call in the aid of political authorities it is often sufficient to call in those that have a local jurisdiction only. Centralized judicial institutions, covering wide areas, are rare in primitive conditions, because widely extensive social relations are rare also. The modern insistence upon the judicial functions of paramount chiefs in Africa is necessitated by the magnitude and complexity of the modern civilized world, in which law *can* only be maintained by central authorities; but, in many areas at least, this insistence is something new. That many African paramount chiefs had some judicial functions in former times is, of course, a fact, but those functions were often less extensive than they are to-day.

In Ngonde, however, there was traditionally no central court at all in which ordinary men could either bring cases direct or appeal from the decisions of their local authorities. At Mbande only cases of treason and insubordination against the Kyungu or the great chiefs were dealt

721 a whole against the Bemba and the Ngoni, and that the poverty-stricken divinity of Lubaga was unable to do this for the Nyakyusa;[1] but neither 642 of them gave their people any high degree of unity among themselves.

For, while in both cases the hierarchical organization touched the common people in its religious and ceremonial aspects, in neither case did it much affect their everyday actions. In Ngonde, as we have seen, the wealth of the Kyungu, which he derived from the ivory trade, enabled him and his nobles of Ngonde to bind the other chiefs and nobles to him, in a way that the Lwembe and his hereditary priests could not do across the Songwe. But this wealth only touched the common people slightly and did not much alter the economic organization of the local groups. Nor had Ngonde any other common activities save tribal wars, religious rituals, and the hoeing of the *milasa*.

Horizontal as well as vertical relations must bind social groups together if their autonomy is to be permanently overcome, and in Ngonde, no less than among the Nyakyusa, the horizontal relations between the local groups were weak; while the religious seclusion of the Kyungus weakened the vertical relations also. The constitution of Ngonde consisted of a number of small and primitive local groups, all firmly attached to Mbande, but each one capable of swinging free[2] and of breaking the tenuous horizontal bonds that joined them among themselves.

Now a distinction must be made between these civil wars and the tribal wars with the Bemba and Ngoni. The civil wars point us to the disorder of Ngonde, a disorder which existed in spite of unifying factors; the tribal wars point us to lack of order which was hardly opposed by any unifying factors at all. No doubt there were occasional peaceful contacts between Ngonde and these other tribes, but they were clearly very slight indeed.

7. *POLITICAL CEREMONIAL.*

643 In every relationship of life there is some ceremonial expression of feeling. And towards the Kyungus of the middle period their subjects 644 frequently expressed the feelings of worship and terror appropriate to an irascible divinity.

"At Mbande the nobles of Ngonde would sit round praising the Kyungu; the drums went '*kindé! kindé!*' And they would praise him in antiphony: 'O Kyungu!—Great Father! Great Father!—

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[1] The Nyakyusa were attacked both by Sango and Ngoni but no tribal alliance was formed to meet these attacks.

[2] In the case of the chiefdoms this metaphor must be qualified by the intervention of the great chiefs between the local chiefdoms and Mbande, and the occasional unifying effect of this fact upon whole groups of chiefdoms.

Burier of men !—Great Father ! Great Father !—O Mpeta ![1]—Great 643
Father ! Great Father !—O Kiposa[1]—Great Father ! Great Father !—
O Kyabala ![1]—Great Father ! Great Father !—O Striker and Stabber ! 644
—Great Father ! Great Father !—O Mwenende ![2]—Great Father !
Great Father !—O Mpolombasambo ![2]—Great Father ! Great Father !
—Dweller in the hot sun !—Great Father ! Great Father !—O Fish-eater ! O Banana-eater !—Great Father ! Great Father ! ' " The general form of this praise-song was identical with that of the prayers in the sacred groves and so it is literally true to say that the nobles of Ngonde worshipped the living Kyungus.

But the majority of their subjects only worshipped from afar in fear and trembling. At Mbande no ordinary commoner was ever conducted into the sacred enclosure but only the territorial nobles and the elder chiefs, and they only occasionally ; while when the Kyungu travelled through his country all men save the very oldest fled from his approach : " In former times we commoners never looked on the face of the Kyungu, we feared him far too much. When he journeyed through Ngonde we all used to flee from him, men, women and children ; only the very oldest stayed to watch him as he came ; and they would fall down and clap their hands in grateful worship."

Even in speech fearful circumlocutions were used to refer to his [195]
journeying—" The country is on the move "—" The great hill is
moving "—" The mystery is coming." While it was taboo both for the
old men who then stayed to see him and for those who entered the sacred
enclosure, ever to greet him in the usual way. Falling down and clap- [576]
ping the hands was the only greeting for the Kyungu, never the ordinary
" how-do-you-do ? " From the nobles and great chiefs men did not
flee ; but the great chiefs, at least, were greeted by falling down and
handclapping, not in the ordinary way.

From the wives of the Kyungu also men fled in terror, fearing lest they be compromised and thrown over the cliff, and this both added to the atmosphere of terror which surrounded him and was an expression of it.

On the other hand the various gifts of the Kyungu to his subjects 643
were, in their ceremonial aspect, an expression of personal relationship to 602
them, of paternal interest in them ; and so also the tribute which they [431]
brought to him was, in its ceremonial aspect, an expression of filial
respect. As in all primitive groups personal rather than impersonal
relationships were dominant in the old Ngonde. The Kyungu was

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[1] Names of early Kyungus.
[2] Archic words which I do not understand.

● 643 602 " the father of all." All the chiefs were his kinsmen, many of the nobles were related to him by marriage, most of them were personally acquainted with him; and these facts were fundamental in the old constitution of Ngonde.

602 764 431 And so also the great chiefs and their subordinates, and the local rulers and their subjects were united by personal bonds which were given frequent ceremonial expression. At every funeral,[1] in particular, whether of chief, noble or commoner, ceremonial gifts of meat, beer, ordinary food, and other gifts also were made along the lines of the political hierarchy.

764 431 [763] On the death of a chief, a noble or any commoner who had, during his life, had many personal dealings with Mbande, a hen was sent to the Kyungu to announce the death, and the Kyungu then returned one of the imported cloths. When other prominent commoners or great-commoners died a hen was sent to the great chief of the area, who also returned an imported cloth. The deaths of ordinary commoners and less prominent great-commoners were announced only to the local ruler (chief or noble) without the gift of a hen, and no cloth was returned.

Similarly when cattle were killed at the funeral of any great-commoner or commoner a special portion of the meat of one beast (the breast and ribs) was always given to the local ruler.[2] In the case of a prominent commoner or great-commoner, however, a similar portion might be given to the great-chief as well. " Such an action was taken on the initiative of the family concerned, the great-chief never claimed it as of right." But if he himself came to the funeral it was normally done. The local rulers themselves, with their wives, attended the funerals of their subjects, and their wives brought food with them, to assist the family in its entertainment of the neighbours. And, finally, at the death of a local ruler or of one of his family, his subjects attended the funeral, bringing gifts of food.[3]

8. *THE CHRONICLE OF NGONDE COMPLETED* (1875-1937)

000 We have now finished our systematic analysis of the constitution of Ngonde as it was before the coming of the Europeans. We have had to rely largely on oral tradition and that by itself is always in some degree suspect. Nevertheless the richness and coherence of what is remembered to-day, together with the observable continuity of modern institutions

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[1] This account excludes the funeral of the Kyungu, which was secretly carried out by the nobles of Ngonde.

[2] This was certainly so in the chiefdoms, evidence for the fiefs is here lacking.

[3] *Vide* Wilson " Nyakyusa Conventions of Burial."

breaks a law; they must be able, if necessary, to call in the aid of some central authority or he will escape them. Many men today, for instance, take wives whose homes are fifty miles or more from their own; and such marriages cannot possibly be regulated by the old primitive procedures. Moreover the rapid and radical changes in the content of law which are necessitated by modern conditions could not be worked out in detail by a number of independent courts without much confusion. And so in the Ngonde of to-day common law is maintained both by a centralized police system and by two central appeal courts, a lower one presided over by the Kyungu, a higher one by the District Commissioner. 178 692 [625]

A dispute which took place in 1935 well illustrates both the novelty of a central appeal court in Ngonde and the support which the Kyungu now receives from the Administration. And it also shows that the old rivalry between the lines of Ngelenge and Ngana still survives. 178 643 ● 692

The Kyungu in his new judicial capacity decided a land-dispute between two local chiefs of the house of "Sub-chief" Kilupula, who is now the most powerful, though not the senior, of the chiefs of Ngana. The Kyungu's decision reversed that of Kilupula, who then became angry. The chief who lost the case is reported to have said: "How dare the Kyungu come here and divide up our land among us? He knows nothing about it." And Kilupula is reported to have taken much the same view; the new judicial functions of the Kyungu were resented by him. And Mwafongo, another great chief of Ngana, sympathised with his resentment.

Then Kilupula and Mwafongo between them wrote a letter addressed to the Provincial Commissioner complaining of the Kyungu's conduct of this case. The District Commissioner, who received it first, called them in and advised them to burn it, but they insisted that it should be forwarded. But before this was done the Governor of Nayasaland arrived in Ngonde on tour and the two chiefs then asked that the letter should be handed to him. And so it was. Whereupon the Governor publicly reprimanded them for writing the letter and asked the Kyungu, before all the people, to decide how he would punish them, by fine or imprisonment. And the Kyungu fined them each £5.

No more striking expression could have been given of the Kyungu's present position as a trusted servant of the Government than this incident. While the fact that the dispute arose out of his new judicial functions and that it was two chiefs of Ngana who stood against him is most illuminating. The Kyungu has exchanged the support of his ancestors for that of the Nyasaland Government, his divinity for a magisterial office. This change, on the whole, has been made easily enough, but a certain temporary friction was inevitable. The chiefs of Ngana are the tradi-

178 643 692 tional rivals of those of Ngelenge; most of the traditional reasons which led them to accept the supremacy of a Kyungu of the house of Ngelenge, whenever one was elected, have now ceased to influence them; while they themselves, as we shall see in a moment, are now barred from the succession. Moreover the Kyungu's supremacy is now mainly operative in the unaccustomed sphere of law. And so a new reason for admitting that supremacy has had to be more forcibly presented to them than to the other rulers of Ngonde.

Once forcibly presented, however, the new reason seems to have been admitted in place of the old ones without much difficulty. For in 1936, the next year, Kilupula spontaneously led his people to the Kyungu and formally handed over a cow to him, thereby re-establishing friendship and mutual respect between the two of them. The dispute has ended in a manifest harmony.[1]

It is relevant to mention here that in the first five months of 1937 only one case was taken on appeal from the Kyungu's court to that of the District Commissioner.

178 565 622 624 692 The general status both of the great chiefs and of the local chiefs and nobles (the "Important" and "Village Headmen,") as also of the great-commoners, has been radically altered by the new legal conditions. Formerly these authorities were the mainstay of a primitive justice, but to-day they could not possibly enforce any legal decisions without the backing of the central Government. And this backing they do not have. Their sphere of influence is so small[2] that it has not been thought worth while to give them any formal judicial authority; they are now mere arbitrators and all important cases go to court.

178 692 The modern constitution of Ngonde is thus more centralized than the old. The support of the Government is given to, and effective judicial power is concentrated in the hands of half a dozen men, with their own advisers. The new judicial functions of the Kyungu and the selected "Sub-chiefs" have, in fact, been transferred to them from the local rulers. Some such centralization was inevitable under modern conditions but the details are dependent upon the decisions of the Government.

(c) *PETER THE FORTUNATE.*

643 The wealth of the present Kyungu is not only due to his great personal abilities. For twenty years before his appointment as Regent (when he himself became the Kyungu in all but name) he was the full-

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[1] This phrase begs no questions about private feelings, upon which we have no evidence.

[2] This is less true of the great chiefs (the "Important Headmen") than of the rest; and possibly an understanding of their status will alter the attitude of the Administration to them.

brother of the reigning Kyungu, and this fact was half his opportunity. It was a tradition in Ngonde that Mbande was a centre of trade as well as of government, and so when Peter went into trade he had a great advantage over all his rivals. He tells with great gusto the story of how, in 1911 when the price of cotton[1] was high, two firms competed for the crop of the Ngonde plain—and the firm which employed him to buy it secured it all. For as soon as the people heard that the Kyungu's brother was buying cotton they all came to him to sell. And throughout his business career the same factor has operated.

From 1899 to 1912 Peter was a employee of European trading firms, from 1913 to 1918 he worked in partnership with them and from 1919 onwards he worked on his own. Now from 1914 to 1923 trade boomed and this fact was the other half of his opportunity. In 1913 his own capital was about £50, in 1923 it was well over £1,000, and he had four shops of his own.

After the war he employed men to hoe cotton for him also ; and here he was greatly assisted by shrewd advice from European friends who watched the market. In 1920 the price of cotton suddenly dropped and he gained nothing, but he was advised to persevere and did so ; and in the next two years he made a profit of £120. But in 1923 when the price of cotton dropped again he advisedly planted none.[2]

Now from 1923 onwards the pressure of his administrative duties began to drive him out of business and from 1924 he kept one shop only open. His savings he turned either into cattle or into burnt-brick houses for his wives and so passed safely through the world-wide slump. In 1937 he still had a herd of cattle worth about £400 and six brick houses, whose total cost was £155, together with a small stock of cloth in his one remaining shop. Figures have a purely relative significance, and these figures in Ngonde represent great wealth.[3]

The effect of this private fortune on the present constitution of [556]
Ngonde is very great indeed, for it enables the Kyungu to maintain a state comparable to that of his predecessors. Had he only his official salary to rely upon he could not do this and his authority and prestige in Ngonde would be less than they are. His successor and his heir will not be the same man ; and it follows inescapably that, if the present rate of salary remains substantially unchanged and if other factors remain equal too, then his successor's authority and prestige will be less than his.

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[1] Native cotton planting was early encouraged in Ngonde.

[2] Soon afterwards a boll-weevil scare caused cotton-planting to be suspended in Ngonde for many years.

[3] Very few chiefs or commoners in Ngonde have more than £20 worth of stock in their herds. There are c. 30,000 cattle in Ngonde, which gives an average of c. 3 head per adult male, and 3 head are worth about £4.

178 643 652 The present Kyungu has gardens hoed for him like his predecessors, and these gardens are still called *milasa* ; but the subtraction of the religious element from this custom has radically altered both its form and its significance. Of old the *milasa* were hoed by the great chiefs and their people because they wanted rain, to-day they go on hoeing them because the Kyungu gives them cattle ; of old they came of themselves fearing drought, to-day they come because he summons them ; of old the produce of the *milasa* was mostly used for the entertainment of guests from a distance, to-day the produce is mostly turned into cash and used in other ways for the maintenance of the Kyungu's position in his own immediate district. But still, as of old, the custom brings him honour.

The late Kyungu, Mwangalaba, is said to have refused to accept this traditional service in the third year of his reign (1907), and certainly for twenty years afterwards no *milasa* were hoed. Mwangalaba is said to have been a timid man, but it is also possible that he was forced to realize that the mere hope of rain would not be sufficient to maintain the custom much longer in the new economic and religious conditions ; he may have preferred to refuse his people's services rather than see them gradually refused to him. For he had nothing but the hope of rain to offer them ; he was a poor man ; he had neither the ivory of his predecessors nor the private fortune of his successor.

But in 1927 when Peter became Regent, the custom was revived on a new basis. The initiative apparently came from the great chiefs, six of whom in that year led their people to hoe *milasa* for Peter,[1] who, as soon as the hoeing was over, gave each of them a cow. Such a return gift was quite unprecedented. And now every year he sends a message to the three or four senior great chiefs, which they pass on to the others, telling them to come and hoe. One or two beasts are always given to each one who comes. In the first half of 1937 three great chiefs had brought their people to hoe *milasa* and to the two who had finished he had given respectively two bulls and a cow and a bull.

The bulk of the produce of the *milasa* he now sells to his people, by the basket, for money, using the money so obtained firstly to buy cattle to replace the ones given to the chiefs and secondly to buy cloths for funeral gifts. The figures which he gave us himself for the year 1927 showed that he was able in that year to replace the cattle expended and in addition to buy £3 or £4 worth of cloths, enough for about a dozen funerals.[2] The custom has become a mildy profitable business enterprise for the Kyungu.

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[1] But no such gardens, I think, are now hoed for the great chiefs themselves. Our *evidence* is here incomplete.

[2] Expenditure on cattle for chiefs—£11 or £12. Proceeds of sale of *milasa* crop—£15. Profit spent on cloths—£3 or £4.

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But it is more than that, for its maintainance establishes a certain continuity of sentiment between present and past. By hoeing the Kyungu's *milasa* the people of Ngonde no longer do worship to an irascible divinity, but they still do honour to their greatest chief. "Where are our manners? Where is our respect?" asked the chief who, in 1927, took the initiative in hoeing Peter's *milasa*. "It seems almost as if they have died in us." And it is worth noting that the one who said this was Kajuni, a chief of Ngana.

Those who have read Richards on the Bemba constitution[1] will wonder how Peter manges at the same time to sell the produce of his *milasa* and also to provide the necessary entertainment for his leading men. The answer is twofold. Distances in Ngonde, in the first place are far shorter than among the Bemba, and the members of Peter's court can attend it regularly while sleeping and eating at home. The main traditional use of the *milasa* in Ngonde was to provide for the distant nobles who brought ivory and for the ivory traders themselves; but nowadays distant guests are rare. Nevertheless his subordinates and leading men are sometimes entertained lavishly by him, and his prestige in part depends upon this. Whether the necessary food and beer is actually taken from the *milasa* or from his private gardens I do not know, but the fact is unimportant as his private gardens are now big enough to provide the necessary surplus by themselves. For he is, in the second place, the possessor of about ten able-bodied wives who, no longer jealously secluded, work in his fields with their children; and he also hires labour to help them, paying for it out of his private fortune.

The nobles of Ngonde only rarely nowadays bring their people to hoe, for their relationship with the Kyungu is less profitable to them than it was in the days of the ivory trade, and the old organization of Mbande has decayed. With the removal of Peter to Bwiba the nobles of Ngonde and their followers began to scatter; only six of them now live at Mbande, with a mere handful of commoners. The other six are dispersed over the Ngonde plain, and only one of them[2] has any considerable personal following.

The requisitioning of food by the Kyungu and the local rulers has now almost ceased, for various reasons. Food can now be turned into cash by sale; and so men are far more reluctant to give their surplus to their rulers than before. Moreover I think that Government has disallowed the custom.[3]

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[1] *Op. cit.*

[2] Ngosi, who ranks as a "Headman" with a few subjects of his own.

[3] We did not investigate this point in Ngonde, but among the Nyakyusa it is certainly so.

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The present Kyungu maintains his position by a continual distribution of material gifts, as the Kyungus did in the past, but many of the details of this distribution are now altered. Besides the cattle which he now gives the great chiefs he also gives away far more funeral gifts than his predecessors. But on the other hand, the traditional distribution of cloth and ivory, after a visit from the ivory traders, and of slaves and cattle to those who brought tribute in food has now ceased. The traditional procedure of giving a newly elected noble a cloth still continues.

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Previous Kyungus only sent cloths to the funerals of the most important of their subjects—chiefs, nobles, great-commoners and a few others. But Peter sends a cloth to nearly every funeral in his own half of the Ngonde plain; though in Kilupula's half and in the hills he only sends cloths to the funerals of chiefs and nobles.

Nearly every family in his own half of the plain now sends a hen (worth 3d.) to Peter to announce a death and he returns a cloth (worth 2s, 3s. or 4s.) as a funeral gift. More important families (chiefs or rich great-commoners) from all over Ngonde send a bull-calf (worth maybe 7s. or 8s.) and to them he returns a cloth or blanket worth anything from 8s. to 12s. In 1934, a year with many deaths, he spent £57 on such funeral gifts and he can hardly have received more than a tenth of that value in hens and calves.

It is this custom above all which gives Peter the status of a paramount chief (as opposed to a subordinate official of the British Administration) in the Ngonde of to-day. And it is only his private fortune which makes it possible. The profits of the *milasa* never reach any such proportions, while, if he spent his official salary on funeral gifts, he would be quite unable to clothe himself, his wives and children.

Now the extension by Peter of the custom of sending cloths to funerals is significant both in relation to the new legal situation and to the present poverty of the other rulers of Ngonde. In his own portion of the plain Peter is the only Native judicial authority who can execute judgments, he is also the only Native ruler who can afford to keep up, on any large scale, the bountiful activities traditionally associated with chieftainship. And he has thus largely replaced the local rulers and the great chiefs, in relation to the common people, both as judge and as plutocrat.

Though we made no intensive study of the areas of the "Subchiefs," it is clear that they are not in a position to give any valuable gifts to their people, and that their prestige is in consequence far lower in their own areas than is the Kyungu's in his; they are but subordinate magistrates with traditional affiliations. Moreover the Kyungu, both through his appeal court and through the sending of funeral gifts to chiefs and nobles is still able to maintain his paramount position in their areas.

Owing to the accident of Peter's private fortune the elements which 178
nd to make the present constitution of Ngonde more autocratic and
ore centralized than the old are, in his case alone, uncounteracted by 642
e element of poverty. And his secular power is thus far greater in
gonde than that of his predecessors. The nobles of Ngonde have lost 643 ●
e old religious holds over him, most of the subordinate rulers have lost
eir judicial functions, he alone is considerably richer than the common
eople.

Personal links between rulers, subordinates and subjects are not only 178
aracteristic of primitive societies. In our own society these links
ormally take the form of entertainment : The King, cabinet ministers, 642
lonial governors, and the mayors of towns entertain the leading citizens,
d their position in part depends upon doing so. And it is thus probable
at personal economic links will still be necessary in the Ngonde of the
ture, when its integration with world society is more complete. Their
rm may change, but wealth will still have to be expended on their
aintenance. Now there are only two ways of assuring that such links
ill be maintained : either special allowances must be paid to the Native
lers of Ngonde as they are paid to European rulers, to enable them to
ep up their position in this way, or else rich men of public spirit must
found to fill these offices. The second solution depends upon the
istence of rich men and the constitutional possibility of giving them
fice ; but it is very unlikely indeed that, in the near future, other Peters
ill be available, who combine wealth both with royal blood and the
neral eligibility for which the nobles look. Moreover it is worth
ting here that quite soon the majority of the Native rulers of Ngonde
ill probably be Christian monogamists and the old economic resources
polygynous marriage will then no longer exist for them at all. The
st solution, however, always remains practicable.

(d) *CONSTITUTIONAL LAW.*

It is generally accepted in Ngonde to-day that all future Kyungus 178
ould be taken from the one house of Mwakasungula and all the three
yungus since the deposition of Mwabulambo have been members of it. 643
he nobles of Ngonde insist that the chiefs of Ngana were only taken in
e middle period *faute de mieux*, when either no suitable chiefs of the
gelenge line could be found, or it seemed to be dwindling dangerously
der the onslaughts of the Ngoni. And the chiefs of Ngana accept this
ct. Why the house of Mwambelo has fallen out of the succession I am
t sure, but, as the house of Mwakasungula is now very numerous, I
ppose it is not considered necessary to look beyond it.

But still the principle obtains of election within the house. From

178 643 Magemo to Mwakabanga no Kyungu has ever been succeeded by his own immediate heir; the choice of Peter as successor to Mwangalaba was unique, for he was his full brother and the heir to his property, but then Peter's ability and personal wealth were unique also. And in the case of the great chiefs and the nobles also the principle of election is still followed.

178 554 643 The grounds of election have slightly altered. Generosity and wealth are still important, but "wisdom in European ways" is now more looked for than maturity, and shortly before our visit a fairly young man was chosen as Mwakasungula. Bravery in war, of course, no longer matters.

178 565 622 The Administration have so far made little use of any great chiefs except the three who are now "Sub-chiefs;" but the others (the "Important Headmen") could be made into effective local rulers, if their salaries were raised. The ordinary chiefs and nobles (the "Village Headmen") are too numerous and have too few subjects to be very effective links in the chain of modern authority. But many of the great chiefs command the respect of considerable numbers. Moreover the fact that they are already being elected for their "wisdom in European ways" suggests that they will prove competent to deal with modern problems.

The traditional secular procedure of election is still followed, with some exceptions: the nobles of Ngonde are now sent by the Kyungu to participate in the "catching" of the great chiefs of Ngana[1] on the spot; the District Commissioner is informed of the result of every election; while the Kyungu himself, no longer secluded, takes a bigger share in making the choices than his predecessors very well could. And many of the religious elements of the traditional procedure, such as the setting of a new Kyungu on the iron stool *Kiŋumbi*, have fallen out of use.

The sending by Peter of the nobles of Ngonde to catch the chiefs of Ngana is a sign of the present centralization of power in his hands under Government. When we asked why the old custom had been changed we were told that it was "because now everything is under the control of Government and comes to the Kyungu."

The gradual ousting by chiefs of the few ruling territorial nobles who still remain in the plain has continued in modern times, but the novel conditions have complicated the process and seem to be checking it. [578] A recent quarrel between Kajuni and Mwenelupembe illustrates this. The head of the house of Kajuni, which is a junior branch of the

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[1] I think this is also true of the less important territorial nobles of the hills, but am not sure.

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THE KYUNGU, PETER

[opposite title page]

9: Wilson E-5 (1934-1955) 1959

FN17 Ngonde FN17
Nyakyusa
Kinga FN12

N

K 171 two peoples are distinct. Their languages are not mutually in-
[197] telligible and the Nyakyusa despise the Kinga as dirty in habit and
N obsequious in manner. There were two main invasions from
[186] BuKinga: (i) that of the 'sons of Lwembe' who settled south and
173 east of Tukuyu, and (ii) that of the 'sons of Ngomale' (or Kukwe),
who settled first at Kina below the northern crater of Rungwe
volcano, and then at Kabale in the foothills to the south-east.
N Most of the present chiefs of the Nyakyusa belong to one or other
173 of these two lineages, and the chiefs of Ngonde are claimed by
● 643 both. The arrival of the chiefs of Lwembe's line may be fixed
between 1560 and 1650, i.e. before the settlement at the Cape, but
after the death of the first Christian martyr in what is now
Rhodesia[1] and the 'sons of Ngomale' followed them some gener-
ations later (*vide infra*, genealogies pp. 3, 27; p. 94). Two of the
invading heroes, Lwembe and Kyungu, became 'divine kings'
whose successors claimed spiritual authority over wide areas, and
the heirs of Kyungu gradually acquired temporal power also.

N About the first inhabitants of the Nyakyusa valley, the *abilema*,
173 tradition is vague; however, it is clear that they were not one
people, but consisted of small, scattered, independent groups,
disparate in origin. Some were very early invaders from BuKinga,
others came from near Lake Rukwa and were kin to the Bungu
of the Rukwa plain. They occupied an almost empty country (as
their name indicates) but they found pygmy hunters[2] in the
N Rungwe forests. The invaders themselves were primarily hunters
[241] and honey-gatherers, though some, at least, of them began to
N cultivate millet, beans, and pumpkins. One group of early
[563] inhabitants, the Penja, which was pushed into the north-west
corner of the valley, has remained relatively discrete, though for
the most part they have fused with the conquerors.

It is clear that nowhere were the invaders allowed to establish
themselves as tyrants since, though their descendants rule over the
[622] various chiefdoms, their authority is strictly limited by the head-
men of the villages who are invariably of commoner stock. More-
[643] over, while the most sacred persons in the country are, or before
[563] the coming of the Europeans were, 'divine kings', descendants of
the original heroes, chosen by each generation to become thei

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[1] In 1561, cf. G. M. Theal, *Records of South-East Africa*, vol. ii, p. 126.

[2] The quality of relations with the Pygmies is summed up in the ironical name fo
them 'Where did you see me?' (*Umbwenekugu?*) The tale is that they were very sensitiv
about their size and the first question on meeting a Nyakyusa was always: 'Where di
you see me?' The only safe reply was: 'Far, far away!'

Chart showing position of sections of chart on "Chiefs of Lwembe's Line." (Facing page 3)

A	B	C
D	E	F
G	H	I

9: Wilson E-5 (1934-1955) 1959

FN17 Ngonde FN17

Nyakyusa

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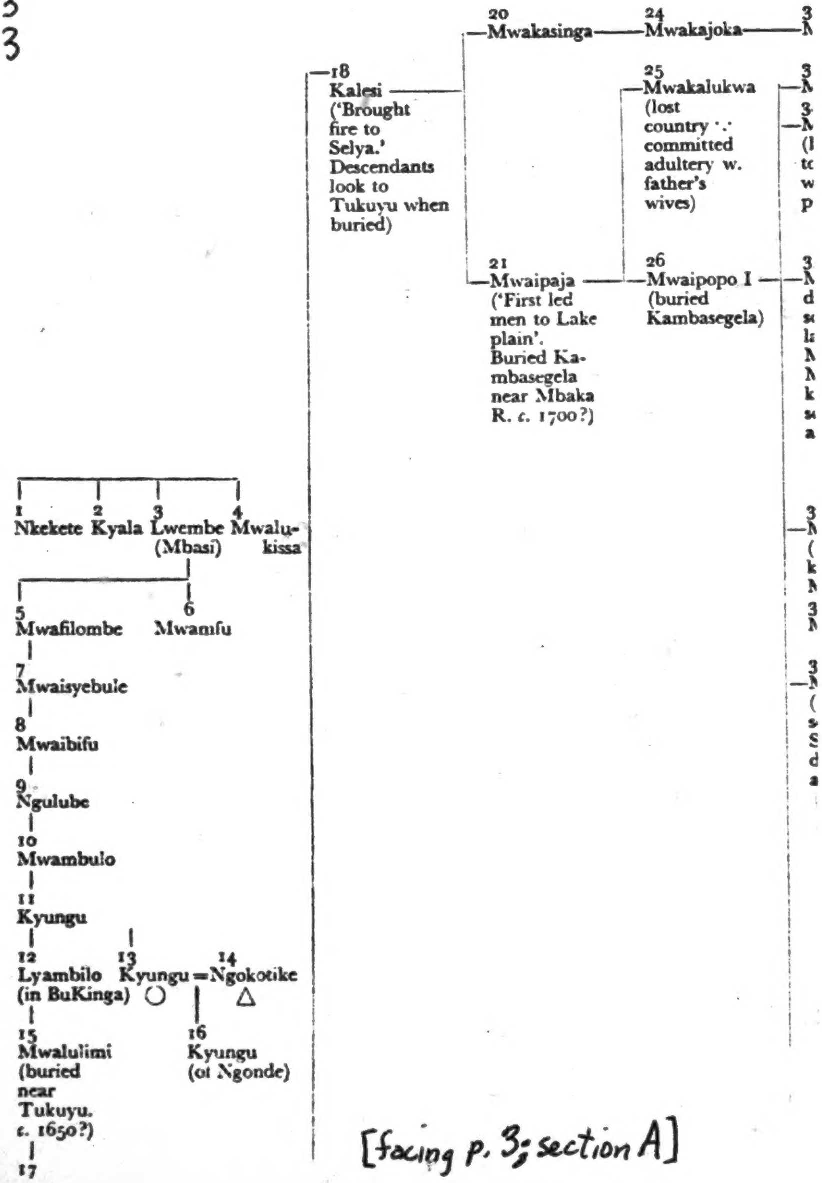
1 Nkekete
2 Kyala
3 Lwembe (Mbasi)
4 Mwalukissa
5 Mwafilombe
6 Mwamfu
7 Mwaisyebule
8 Mwaibifu
9 Ngulube
10 Mwambulo
11 Kyungu
12 Lyambilo (in BuKinga)
13 Kyungu
14 Ngokotike
15 Mwalulimi (buried near Tukuyu. c. 1650?)
16 Kyungu (of Ngonde)
17
18 Kalesi ('Brought fire to Selya.' Descendants look to Tukuyu when buried)
20 Mwakasinga
21 Mwaipaja ('First led men to Lake plain'. Buried Kambasegela near Mbaka R. c. 1700?)
24 Mwakajoka
25 Mwakalukwa (lost country ∵ committed adultery w. father's wives)
26 Mwaipopo I (buried Kambasegela)

[facing p. 3; section A]

CHIEFS OF LWEMBE'S LINE

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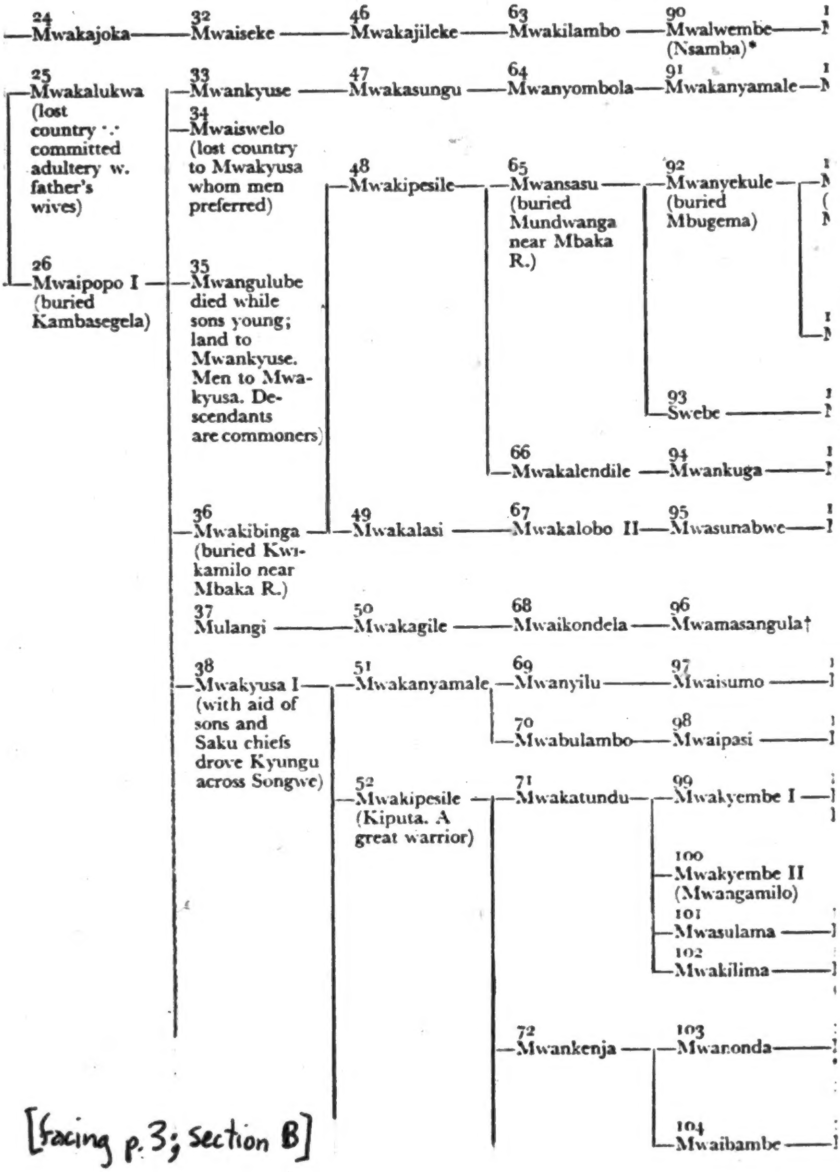
24 Mwakajoka
25 Mwakalukwa (lost country ∵ committed adultery w. father's wives)
26 Mwaipopo I (buried Kambasegela)
32 Mwaiseke
33 Mwankyuse
34 Mwaiswelo (lost country to Mwakyusa whom men preferred)
35 Mwangulube died while sons young; land to Mwankyuse. Men to Mwakyusa. Descendants are commoners)
36 Mwakibinga (buried Kwikamilo near Mbaka R.)
37 Mulangi
38 Mwakyusa I (with aid of sons and Saku chiefs drove Kyungu across Songwe)
46 Mwakajileke
47 Mwakasungu
48 Mwakipesile
49 Mwakalasi
50 Mwakagile
51 Mwakanyamale
52 Mwakipesile (Kiputa. A great warrior)
63 Mwakilambo
64 Mwanyombola
65 Mwansasu (buried Mundwanga near Mbaka R.)
66 Mwakalendile
67 Mwakalobo II
68 Mwaikondela
69 Mwanyilu
70 Mwabulambo
71 Mwakatundu
72 Mwankenja
90 Mwalwembe (Nsamba)*
91 Mwakanyamale
92 Mwanyekule (buried Mbugema)
93 Swebe
94 Mwankuga
95 Mwasunabwe
96 Mwamasangula†
97 Mwaisumo
98 Mwaipasi
99 Mwakyembe I
100 Mwakyembe II (Mwangamilo)
101 Mwasulama
102 Mwakilima
103 Mwanonda
104 Mwaibambe

[facing p. 3; section B]

9: Wilson E-5 (1934-1955) 1959

FN17 Ngonde FN17

Nyakyusa

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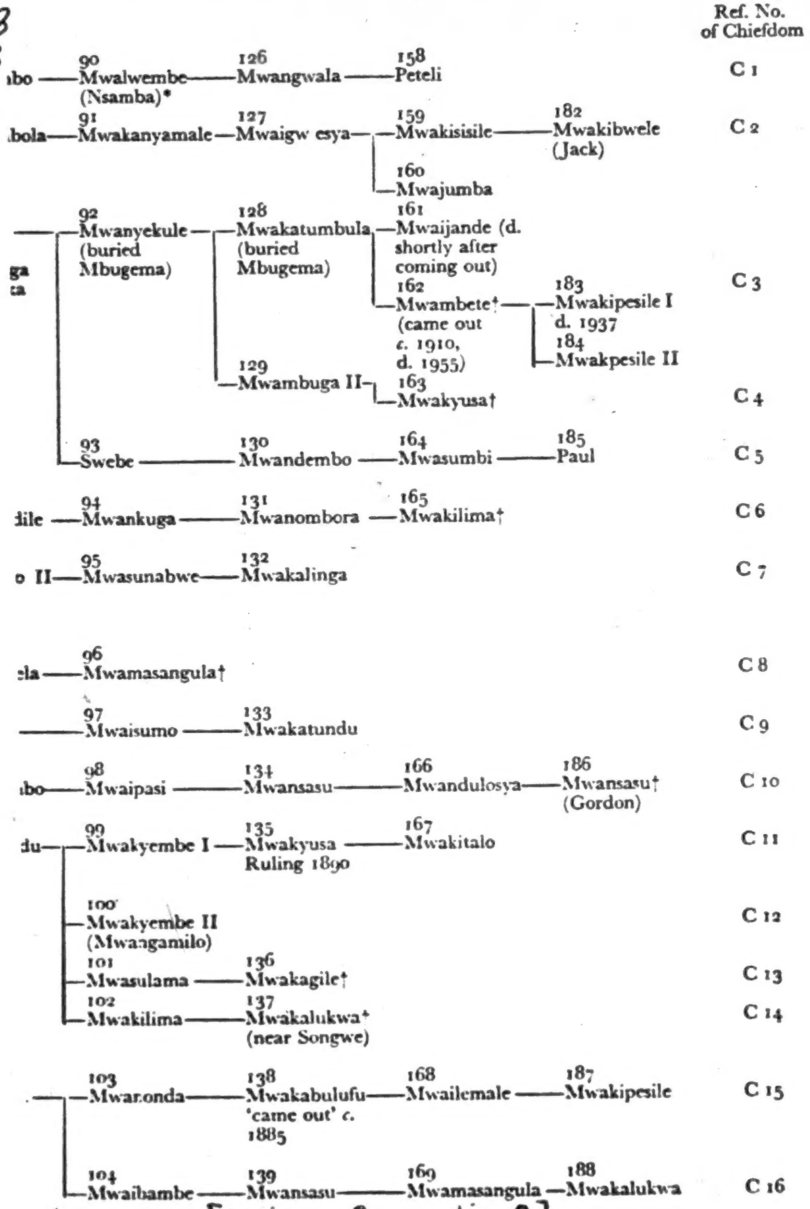


Ref. No. of Chiefdom
ıbo — 90 Mwalwembe (Nsamba)* — 126 Mwangwala — 158 Peteli — C 1
ıbola — 91 Mwakanyamale — 127 Mwaigw esya — 159 Mwakisisile — 182 Mwakibwele (Jack) — C 2
160 Mwajumba
ga ta — 92 Mwanyekule (buried Mbugema) — 128 Mwakatumbula (buried Mbugema) — 161 Mwaijande (d. shortly after coming out)
162 Mwambete† (came out c. 1910, d. 1955) — 183 Mwakipesile I d. 1937 — C 3
184 Mwakpesile II
129 Mwambuga II — 163 Mwakyusa† — C 4
93 Swebe — 130 Mwandembo — 164 Mwasumbi — 185 Paul — C 5
dile — 94 Mwankuga — 131 Mwanombora — 165 Mwakilima† — C 6
o II — 95 Mwasunabwe — 132 Mwakalinga — C 7
ela — 96 Mwamasangula† — C 8
97 Mwaisumo — 133 Mwakatundu — C 9
ıbo — 98 Mwaipasi — 134 Mwansasu — 166 Mwandulosya — 186 Mwansasu† (Gordon) — C 10
du — 99 Mwakyembe I — 135 Mwakyusa Ruling 1890 — 167 Mwakitalo — C 11
100 Mwakyembe II (Mwangamilo) — C 12
101 Mwasulama — 136 Mwakagile† — C 13
102 Mwakilima — 137 Mwakalukwa† (near Songwe) — C 14
103 Mwanonda — 138 Mwakabulufu 'came out' c. 1885 — 168 Mwailemale — 187 Mwakipesile — C 15
104 Mwaibambe — 139 Mwansasu — 169 Mwamasangula — 188 Mwakalukwa — C 16

[facing p. 9; section C]

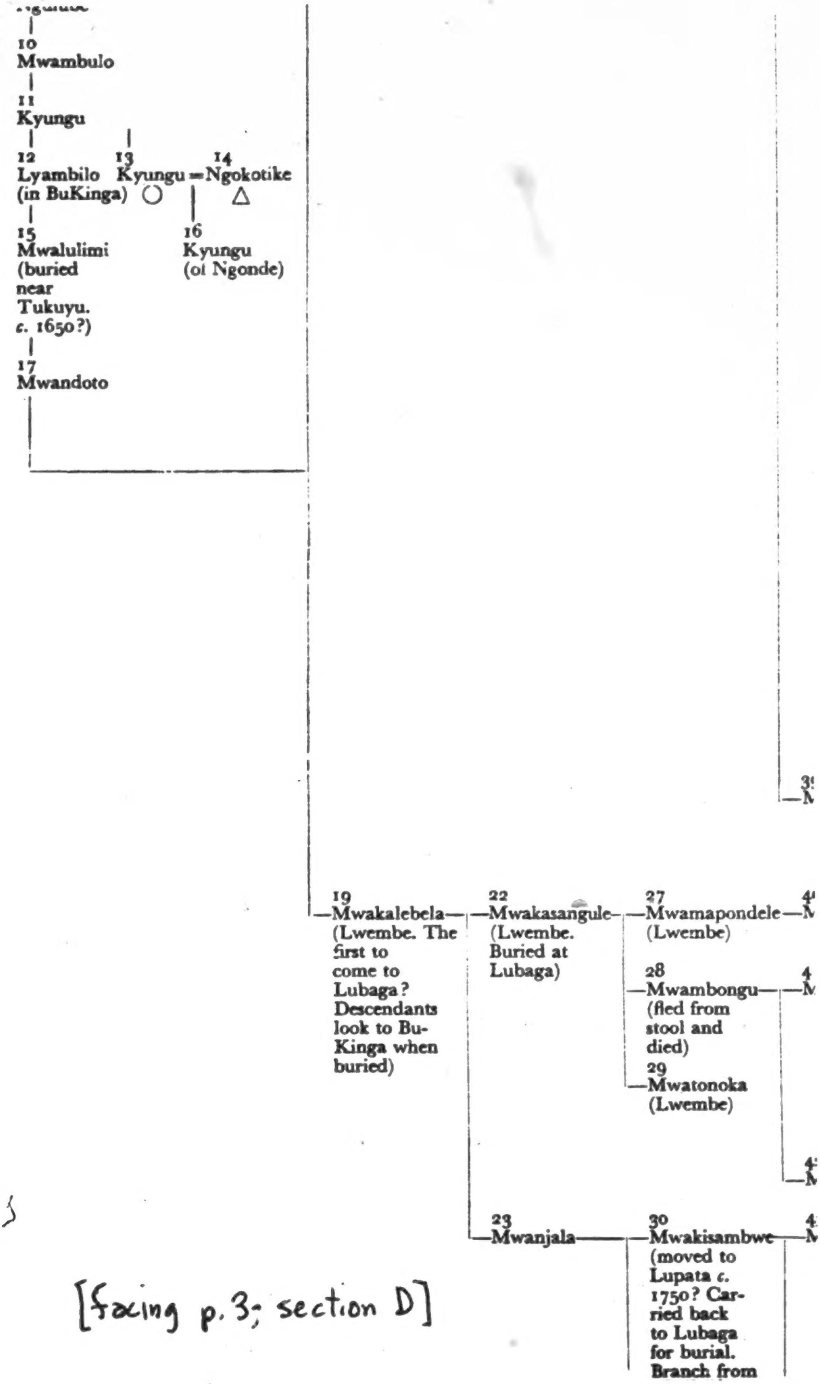
9: Wilson E-5 (1934-1955) 1959

FN17 Ngonde FN17

Nyakyusa

173

643

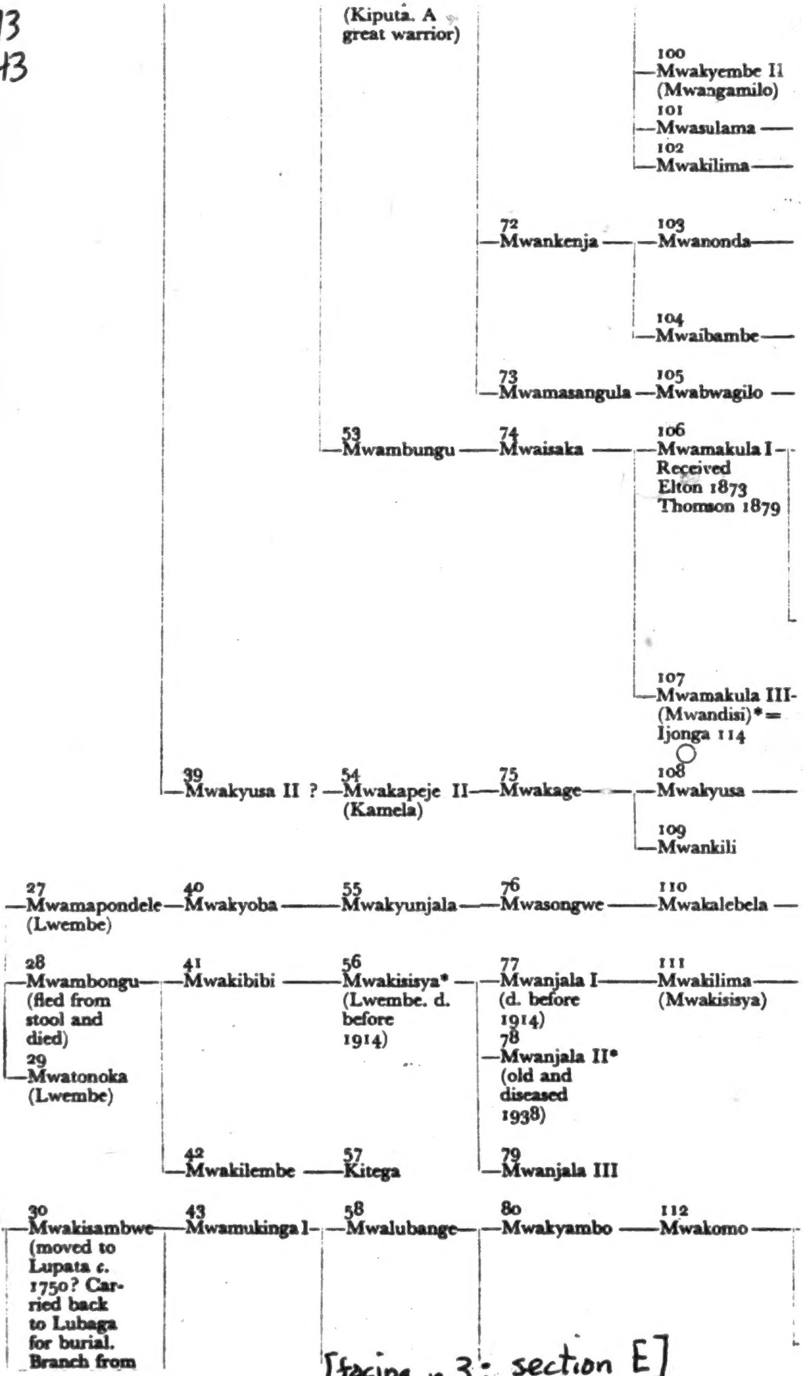

10 Mwambulo
11 Kyungu
12 Lyambilo (in BuKinga)
13 Kyungu ○
14 Ngokotike △
15 Mwalulimi (buried near Tukuyu. c. 1650?)
16 Kyungu (of Ngonde)
17 Mwandoto
19 Mwakalebela (Lwembe. The first to come to Lubaga? Descendants look to BuKinga when buried)
22 Mwakasangule (Lwembe. Buried at Lubaga)
23 Mwanjala
27 Mwamapondele (Lwembe)
28 Mwambongu (fled from stool and died)
29 Mwatonoka (Lwembe)
30 Mwakisambwe (moved to Lupata c. 1750? Carried back to Lubaga for burial. Branch from

[facing p. 3; section D]

9: Wilson E-5 (1934-1955) 1959

FN17 Ngonde FN17
Nyakyusa

173
643


(Kiputa. A great warrior)
100 Mwakyembe II (Mwangamilo)
101 Mwasulama
102 Mwakilima
72 Mwankenja
103 Mwanonda
104 Mwaibambe
73 Mwamasangula
105 Mwabwagilo
53 Mwambungu
74 Mwaisaka
106 Mwamakula I Received Elton 1873 Thomson 1879
107 Mwamakula III (Mwandisi)* = Ijonga 114
39 Mwakyusa II ?
54 Mwakapeje II (Kamela)
75 Mwakage
108 Mwakyusa
109 Mwankili
27 Mwamapondele (Lwembe)
40 Mwakyoba
55 Mwakyunjala
76 Mwasongwe
110 Mwakalebela
28 Mwambongu (fled from stool and died)
41 Mwakibibi
56 Mwakisisya* (Lwembe. d. before 1914)
77 Mwanjala I (d. before 1914)
111 Mwakilima (Mwakisisya)
78 Mwanjala II* (old and diseased 1938)
29 Mwatonoka (Lwembe)
42 Mwakilembe
57 Kitega
79 Mwanjala III
30 Mwakisambwe (moved to Lupata c. 1750? Carried back to Lubaga for burial. Branch from
43 Mwamukinga I
58 Mwalubange
80 Mwakyambo
112 Mwakomo

[facing p.3; section E]

9: Wilson E-5 (1934-1955) 1959

FN17 Ngonde FN17

Nyakyusa

173
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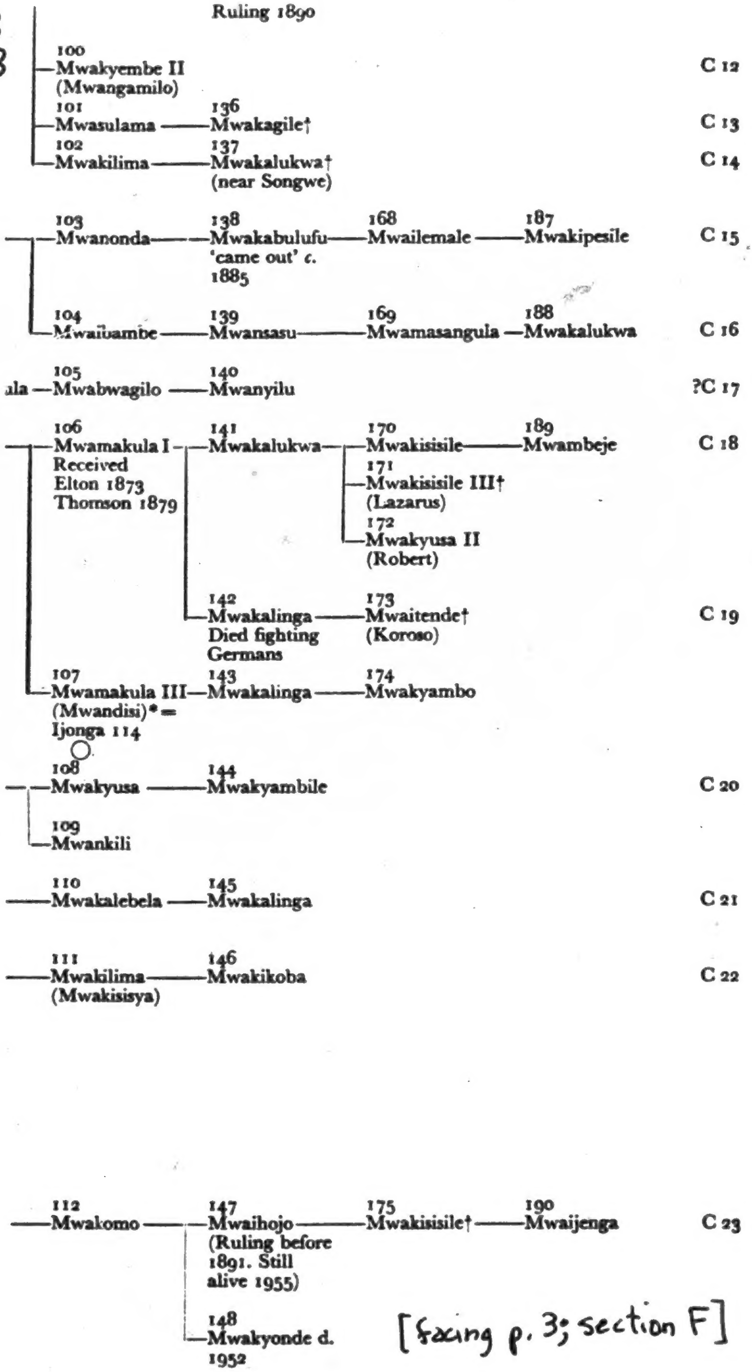
Ruling 1890
100 Mwakyembe II (Mwangamilo) — C 12
101 Mwasulama — 136 Mwakagile† — C 13
102 Mwakilima — 137 Mwakalukwa† (near Songwe) — C 14
103 Mwanonda — 138 Mwakabulufu 'came out' c. 1885 — 168 Mwailemale — 187 Mwakipesile — C 15
104 Mwaibambe — 139 Mwansasu — 169 Mwamasangula — 188 Mwakalukwa — C 16
ala — 105 Mwabwagilo — 140 Mwanyilu — ?C 17
106 Mwamakula I - Received Elton 1873 Thomson 1879 — 141 Mwakalukwa — 170 Mwakisisile — 189 Mwambeje — C 18
171 Mwakisisile III† (Lazarus)
172 Mwakyusa II (Robert)
142 Mwakalinga Died fighting Germans — 173 Mwaitende† (Koroso) — C 19
107 Mwamakula III (Mwandisi)* = Ijonga 114 — 143 Mwakalinga — 174 Mwakyambo
108 Mwakyusa — 144 Mwakyambile — C 20
109 Mwankili
110 Mwakalebela — 145 Mwakalinga — C 21
111 Mwakilima (Mwakisisya) — 146 Mwakikoba — C 22
112 Mwakomo — 147 Mwaihojo (Ruling before 1891. Still alive 1955) — 175 Mwakisisile† — 190 Mwaijenga — C 23
148 Mwakyonde d. 1952

[facing p. 3; section F]

9: Wilson E-5 (1934-1955) 1959

FN17 Ngonde FN17

Nyakyusa

173
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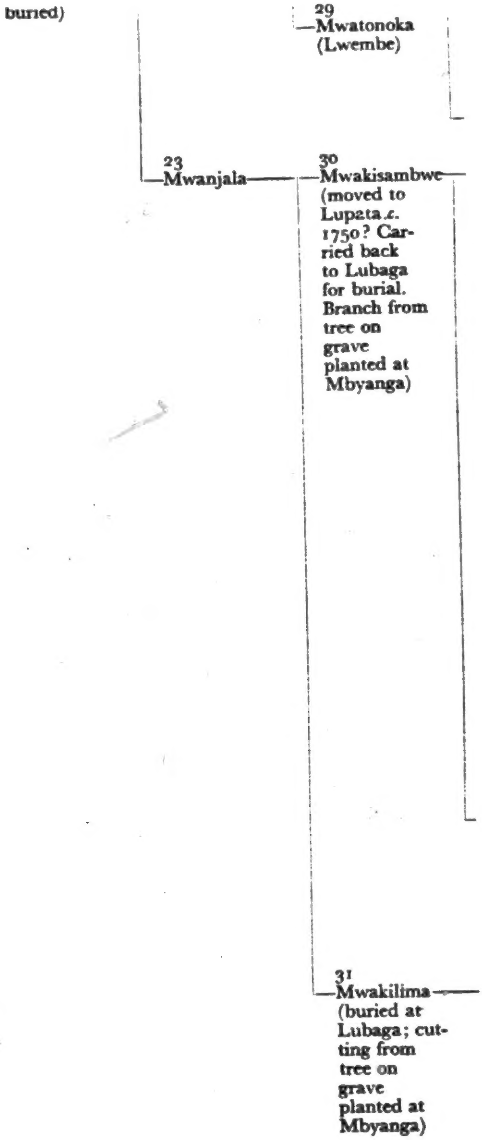
buried)
29
Mwatonoka
(Lwembe)
23
Mwanjala
30
Mwakisambwe
(moved to Lupata c. 1750? Carried back to Lubaga for burial. Branch from tree on grave planted at Mbyanga)
31
Mwakilima
(buried at Lubaga; cutting from tree on grave planted at Mbyanga)

Key
—[=brothers
— =son of
† =chief in 1955
* =priest
= =married

Main informants: 90 : 86 : 107 : 116 : 162 : 171 : 148 : 109. 90 & 107 were very old in 1935 and acknowledged authorities.

The seniority of 90's line is questioned by some.

[facing p. 3; section G]

9: Wilson E-5 (1934-1955) 1959

FN17 Ngonde FN17
Nyakyusa

173
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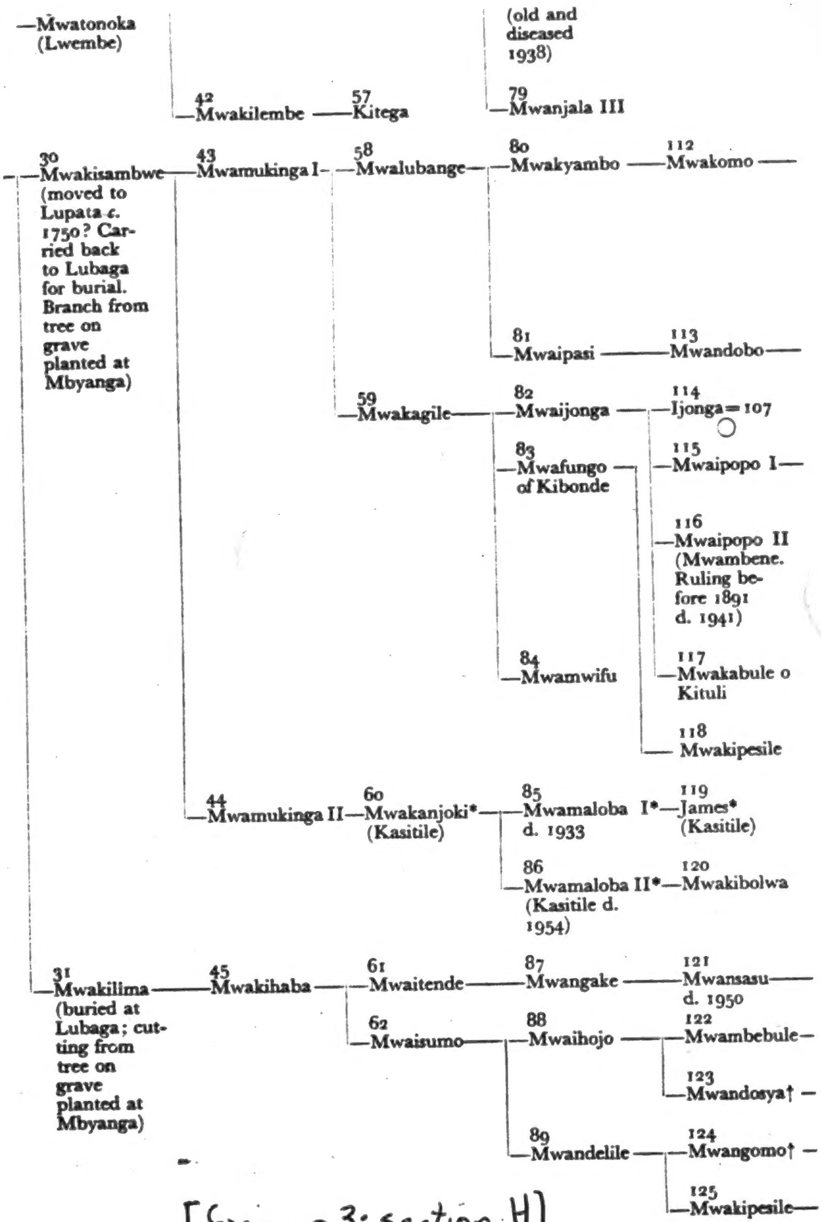
—Mwatonoka (Lwembe)
42 —Mwakilembe
57 —Kitega
(old and diseased 1938)
79 —Mwanjala III
30 —Mwakisambwe (moved to Lupata c. 1750? Carried back to Lubaga for burial. Branch from tree on grave planted at Mbyanga)
43 Mwamukinga I
58 —Mwalubange
80 —Mwakyambo
112 —Mwakomo
81 —Mwaipasi
113 —Mwandobo
59 —Mwakagile
82 —Mwaijonga
114 —Ijonga = 107
83 —Mwafungo of Kibonde
115 —Mwaipopo I
116 —Mwaipopo II (Mwambene. Ruling before 1891 d. 1941)
84 —Mwamwifu
117 —Mwakabule o Kituli
118 Mwakipesile
44 —Mwamukinga II
60 —Mwakanjoki* (Kasitile)
85 —Mwamaloba I* d. 1933
119 —James* (Kasitile)
86 —Mwamaloba II* (Kasitile d. 1954)
120 —Mwakibolwa
31 —Mwakilima (buried at Lubaga; cutting from tree on grave planted at Mbyanga)
45 Mwakihaba
61 —Mwaitende
87 —Mwangake
121 —Mwansasu d. 1950
62 —Mwaisumo
88 —Mwaihojo
122 —Mwambebule
123 —Mwandosya†
89 —Mwandelile
124 —Mwangomo†
125 —Mwakipesile

[facing p. 3; section H]

9: Wilson E-5 (1934-1955) 1959
FN17 Ngonde FN17
Nyakyusa

173
643

III

bo —— 112 Mwakomo —— 147 Mwaihojo (Ruling before 1891. Still alive 1955) —— 175 Mwakisisile† —— 190 Mwaijenga C 23
148 Mwakyonde d. 1952

—— 113 Mwandobo —— 149 Mwakitalima* —— 176 Mwakasula

a —— 114 Ijonga = 107
115 Mwaipopo I —— 150 Mwankuga I d. 1934 —— 177 Mwanyilu† came out 1953 C 24
178 Mwabungulu came out 1953
116 Mwaipopo II (Mwambene. Ruling before 1891 d. 1941) —— 151 Mwankuga II
152 Mwaseba
117 Mwakabule o Kituli
118 Mwakipesile

pa I* —— 119 James* (Kasitile)

pa II* —— 120 Mwakibolwa

: —— 121 Mwansasu d. 1950 —— 153 Mwaihojo† C 25
—— 122 Mwambebule —— 154 Mwaipungu —— 179 Mwangunule C 26
123 Mwandosya† —— 155 Mwamupwa C 27
le —— 124 Mwangomo† —— 156 Mwaijonga —— 180 Mwamasika C 28
125 Mwakipesile —— 157 Mwanjola† —— 181 Mwatonoka C 29

[facing p. 3; section I]

living representatives, to take their name, and to sacrifice at their 173
groves, it was commoner priests who chose them and, as will be [643
seen, put them to death when it was expedient for the good of the 643]
people. It is clear, too, from what source the commoners drew [563]
their power. The invaders were supposed to have brought into
the country fire, cattle, crops, and iron; they were creators, the [177]
guarantors and preservers of fertility; and it was to foster and increase fertility that men worshipped and sacrificed at the groves of the mythical heroes. The aborigines, on the other hand, without fire, without iron, and feeding on raw meat as the myth depicts them, possessed one weapon of terrible potency, witchcraft, which no chief, not even a priest of the chief's lineage, could withstand or would dare to challenge. To the Nyakyusa the essential nature of the universe, established in history and in the institutions of their society, was reciprocity, a balance between chiefs and commoners, between cattle-owners and cultivators, between the creative power of the heroes and the black anger of the witches. The idea of a chief who was a dictator was as foreign as the idea of a single omnipotent creator. Moreover, there was a multiplicity of chiefs, no single central authority.

The heroic tradition, then, accounts for the differences between 173
the chiefs and commoners and for the remarkable equilibrium that
obtains between them. It accounts also, as we shall find, for the 643
'coming out' ritual, at least in part. It is strangely silent, however, 561
about the origin of what is perhaps the most striking feature of Nyakyusa social life, the system of age-villages. The absence of any link between the myths of the heroes and the founding of age-villages is the more surprising in that the pattern of age-organization almost certainly came into the valley from the north-east. Only in East Africa was government based on age groups and the handing over of power from one generation to the next celebrated by whole communities. If the system of age-villages came in with the eastern invaders why is this contribution to civilized living (for the Nyakyusa regard village life as the essence of civilization) never mentioned? The only explanation we can offer is that the age structure is not necessarily linked with chieftainship, whereas the control of cattle and iron was the basis of power, and making fire was a symbol, not only of a new chieftainship, but of the vital creative force in the body of the chief. The heroic cycle justifies the relations between chiefs and commoners, but is not concerned with other institutions of the society.

634 accessible in an earlier book, *Rituals of Kinship among the Nyakyusa*,[1]
796 and the details need not be recapitulated here.

769 Perhaps the reader has already noted a certain difficulty over
tenses: 'is' tends to merge into 'was'. When we first visited
114 BuNyakyusa in 1934 missionaries of various denominations had
797 already been at work, and a foreign government in control, for
177 forty years past. Between 1934 and my last visit in 1955 the
changes have been great, but I use the present tense for things
seen at first hand, whether earlier or later, and a separate chapter
is devoted to the twenty years' change. It is well to recognize at
the outset, however, that in 1934 the sanctity and power of the
[643] 'divine kings' was already questioned and their rituals were
[796] curtailed, and even the pagan cosmology of the Nyakyusa was
beginning to exhibit traces of Christian influence. One striking
example was the changing, or rather the fluid, connotation of the
name *Kyala*.

Two new types of organization developed in BuNyakyusa with the arrival of the Europeans: churches which are based on a principle of association wholly new to the pagan tradition—common belief as opposed to kinship or contiguity; and a centralized system of government. To these have now been added trading concerns, of which the most important are co-operative societies exporting coffee and rice.

121 The subject of this book is (i) the traditional rituals celebrated
on behalf of chiefdoms and groups of chiefdoms, and (ii) the
changing ideas and values apparent as a section of the Nyakyusa
turn from paganism to Christianity. In the concluding chapters
an attempt is made to demonstrate the links between the changes
in social structure and the changes in ritual.

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[1] Monica Wilson, *Rituals of Kinship among the Nyakyusa*, 1957.

> 539 Mwakaleli and came here and died. The Kinga went to BuSangu to buy food, for there was great hunger after Mbasi and Kyala were driven out, and wandering home they came here and met Mbasi. He said, 'Go home, there will be plenty of food, but I want my things.' He had left them at his father's place when he fled with his sister Kyungu. He asked for his leopard and otterskins, his drums, his bows for shooting birds,[1] his harp, mats, a stool, bamboo beer, and twenty hoes. . . . Then the Kinga went back and found their country full of food; and they brought all his things to Mbasi and even things like salt that he had not asked for. . . . This is how the ritual began. . . . Mbasi ruled because he had helped them in their hunger.

173 773 Kasitile (86), the rain-maker, speaking of the same incident, stressed only the hoes. Lwembe 'came to Lubaga and found a good place to settle, then he sent out messengers to Mwemusi (the Kinga chief) and said: "I want my hoes, especially my great, eyed hoe" (*ilikumbulu ilya maso*).' (The old ritual hoes had per- [778] forations—'eyes'—on the blades comparable to the perforations on other rain-making instruments.) Still today Kinga priests [782] come to Lubaga to sacrifice to Lwembe (3), and they bring with them hoes.[2]

The hero of Ngonde, the Kyungu (16), was also associated with ● [643] iron implements which he had brought with him—a spear, staff, stool, and a sieve used for making rain, which were royal insignia, and razors, spears, and knives of an unusual pattern, which long remained in the groves of the hero and his successors.

In the commonly-told Nyakyusa myth it was Lwembe who [372] introduced fire to BuNyakyusa—'he found the original occupants eating their food raw'—and the fact that he conferred so great a benefit is the charter for the position of the chiefs, celebrated at every 'coming out'. The Kinga priests push the spread of fire back a little further.

> 539 372 Of old in this country [BuKinga] there was no fire, men ate food uncooked; there were very few men in the country, most of it was forest. This was after Mwemusi came to Kinga country. Then one man, a hunter, went into the forest to hunt buck and otter, and he had dogs. And in the forest he made fire with a drill and cooked his food; and gave his friends cooked food to eat, and they were astonished.

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[1] The bow and arrow are not now used among the Nyakyusa, but men in their thirties had used them when boys, for shooting birds.

[2] cf. Ludwig Weichert, *Mapilape i Africa! Keine wieder Afrika* (Berlin, 1927), p. 105, for a photograph of one.

173 the Kyungu had a miraculous power of creating animals and it was by making elephants, buffaloes, and guinea-fowl for Sim-
773 bobwe and his men to hunt, and climbing Mbande when it was deserted, that he captured it. Directly he reached the top he struck his drum and 'when Simbobwe heard the drums beaten on the hill he fled to his own country'. This Kyungu's successors on
[643] Mbande became 'divine kings' with miraculous power much like that of the Lwembe at Lubaga. One of his brothers became chief of the Namwanga; another of the Iwa; and a third became the rival of his sister's son for the chieftainship of the Lambya. Such is the Ngonde account. The Kukwe say that the Kyungus of Ngonde come from the same line as the chiefs of Kabale, while the men of Lwembe insist that he was descended from a daughter of their line (*vide supra*, p. 2). What connexion existed between the lineages of Lwembe and Ngomale is uncertain, but the assumption is that they, together with the chiefs of the Pangwa and Kisi, sprang from a common stock in BuKinga.

The commonest story of origin is that all the peoples of the area, save the Sangu, emerged from a 'dark house' (*nyumba ndisu*) near the present Njombe, and came to Ilongo (KwiLongo) in the forest, in what is now Bena country. Nsamba, a Nyakyusa priest of the chief's lineage, with a reputation as a historian, spoke of a 'few men' coming from 'a rocky shore to the north-west' (Lake Tanganyika?) and travelling to the east shore of Nyasa, where they increased in numbers, and then spread northwards through BuKinga; Mwenifumbo, a noble of Ngonde, spoke of Ngulube the 'pale' having come to BuKinga 'from the north'.[1] But the Kinga priests knew nothing of the 'rocky shore' or northern origin; and if we take the direction in which the corpse faces when buried (the most certain criterion of the direction of origin) then the Nyakyusa and Ngonde people came from BuKinga, some travelling to the north of Rungwe volcano and some to the south, and the Kinga themselves came from the east.

Other evidence also indicates that the chiefs came from the
[174] east or north-east rather than the north-west. The cattle they brought were the short-horned Zebu type, like those of the Masai and other peoples of central and eastern Tanganyika and Kenya. They are quite different from the long-horned cattle of the Hima

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[1] Godfrey Wilson, *The Constitution of Ngonde*, Rhodes-Livingstone Papers No. 3, p. 10 (1939). According to the Ngonde version, Ngulube was the *first* ancestor, but Nsamba began the genealogy four generations earlier (*vide* chart, facing p. 3).

and Tutsi who established conquest states to the north-west.[1] 173

Whatever the origin and adventures of the heroes they were 773
important in Nyakyusa and Ngonde history because their [174]
graves became centres of religious ritual which linked together groups that were otherwise largely independent. The myths about them are the charter for chieftainship. They are depicted as benefactors who brought to uncivilized men not only the institution of chieftainship itself, but fire, cattle, iron, seed, and a creative power resident in their own bodies and those of their anointed heirs. But the myths also justify the power of commoners [778]
who first occupied the country and who have witchcraft in their [754]
bellies:

> The commoners whom Lwembe found here were extraordinary. They 539
> were cultivators, but they had not yet got fire, they ate their food raw. It was we chiefs, it was Lwembe, who brought fire and cattle—he came and found the original occupants without cattle; hence the commoners say, 'We are the earth'. Commoners are different from us physically, they are black; they are awe-inspiring, they are witches. Before you Europeans came the chiefs like Mwaipopo (116) were not [777]
> awe-inspiring, they feared the commoners very much; the commoners hammered the chief with their fists—yes, by daylight. And if the chief [754]
> cut a man's bananas that man took the chief's. If the commoners were [643]
> angry with Mwaipopo they fetched Mwangomo (124 whose chiefdom adjoins Mwaipopo's) at night by their witchcraft; he came in the night with his people and seized the cattle, both those of the chief, Mwaipopo, and those of the commoners. The next day the commoners said: 'It is we, we are angry. Why do you not look after us? Why do you not kill cattle for us?' Then Mwaipopo would kill two head of cattle and all the men in the country ate. . . . Mwaipopo and his equals were not awe-inspiring long ago, it is you Europeans who have created chieftainship and awe.

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[1] cf. H. H. Curson and R. W. Thornton, 'A Contribution to the Study of African Native Cattle', *Onderstepoort Journal of Veterinary Science and Animal Industry*, vii, 2 [113]
October 1936 (Government Printer, Pretoria). An analysis of the distribution and migration of breeds in Africa.

H. B. Thompson and R. Scott, *Uganda* (1931), pp. 195 ff.

Fülleborn, *op. cit.*, pl. 68: 69.

M. Merker, *Die Masai*, pp. 157 ff., 1904, Berlin.

H. H. Johnston, *The Uganda Protectorate*, 1904, pp. 86, 103 (early photographs of Nyoro cattle).

The short-horn type predominates among the Nyakyusa, but some animals suggest [231]
an intermixture with Sanga cattle. The hump is regarded as a great delicacy and is exaggerated in the clay cattle which boys model. Cf. Fülleborn, *op. cit.*, pl. 70. The [825]
similarity between the ritual and symbolism of the Nyakyusa and those of the Ganda [532]
as described by Roscoe is marked. J. Roscoe, *The Baganda*, 1911.

FN17 Ngonde FN17

173 The balance between chiefs and commoners is explicit. So
773 also is their dependence on *both* cultivation and herding, and it
[643] should be noted that, though the Nyakyusa speak of themselves
as stock men, they are not pastoralists to the same extent as
[233] the Masai or the Nuer. The number of cattle in Rungwe District
today is less than half the human population, and men traditionally have done the heaviest share of cultivation.

773 In every version of the myth the tension between father and
593 son, or older and younger brother, is stressed. In Nyakyusa
561 society the father (or his eldest son who replaces him) controls
173 the family property and exacts obedience from his juniors who
[769] continue to show their respect after his death by sacrifices. The
tale of Kyala and Lwembe celebrates the triumph of the junior. Thus, at the heart of the very ritual which sanctifies seniority there is the assertion of the victory of the son and younger brother. The myth expresses the aspirations of subordinates—of commoners and junior kinsmen—as well as the power of chiefs and seniors.

173 As we have already noted, the heroic cycle makes no reference
773 to the peculiar Nyakyusa institution of age-villages. Their charter
561 is a quite separate myth[1] which tells of a chief who looked on his
621 daughter-in-law and loved her and took her, and this so shocked
606 men that in future fathers and sons built separately, so that a
father-in-law should never see his daughter-in-law.

There are other hints of the eternal theme. Besides the saga of
173 Lwembe there is another quite different tale of the origin of fire,
773 which is less often related. In it a girl who had angered her father
372 by breaking his drinking calabash fled from BuKinga to the
Nyakyusa valley, where she found people who ate their food raw. She made fire and cooked for them and 'all women came to her to learn to cook'. The long-necked calabash, used as a drinking
[415] vessel and in prayer to the shades, is a man's most personal
[768] possession destroyed at his death, and it stands for a husband,
while cooking is a symbol of the sexual activity of women, so the myth is perhaps a drama of incest, but we have no direct evidence of this.

173 This last is the only tale in which a woman appears as a
773 benefactor. In general, the mythology is that of a strongly
562 patrilineal society in which men are dominant. The wives of
Lwembe who walked behind their lord, shepherded by a lion,

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[1] cf. Monica Wilson, *Good Company*, p. 85.

CHAPTER III

THE 'DIVINE KINGS' 17

(a) CHARACTERISTICS OF 'DIVINE KINGS'

THE heroic myths and genealogies proclaim the origin of chieftainship, and point to a distinction between ordinary chiefs and those we call 'divine kings'. Two remote ancestors who were preeminent are worshipped as heroes and creators, their graves are centres at which a large number of chiefdoms join in celebration, and living representatives are selected in every generation bearing their names. These are the 'divine kings', the Lwembe of Lubaga (in the centre of Nyakyusa country) and the Kyungu of Mbande near Karonga in Nyasaland. A third hero, Kyala, is associated with the cave, PaliKyala, near Ikombe at the north-east corner of the Lake, and he is worshipped in the same way as the other two, except that the priest of the cave is not his descendant and does not embody him. According to the myth, Kyala was the brother of Lwembe, but died without issue. However, the word for chiefs—*aba-nya-fyale*—is popularly believed to mean 'the sons of Kyala'.[1] 773 769 643

Kyala is one hero among others, but his name is *also* used in the sense of 'the lord': a chief is *kyala gwake* (his lord) to a commoner, a father is *kyala gwake* to his son or daughter 'because he created him' and a shade is *kyala* to his living kinsman (*unyuka jo kyala*). Of one who performs a feat—something difficult—it is said 'he is Kyala'.[2] This usage is said to be very old, but there is yet another meaning of the word which is new. *Kyala* was used by the European missionaries (who first established themselves near PaliKyala) as their translation of 'God'. Today these three conceptions are inextricably mixed: Kyala the hero, Kyala 'the 769 643 [775] [177] [797]

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[1] I am indebted to the Reverend Paul Fueter for drawing my attention to this point. It is doubtful whether *Kyala* and *fyale* in fact come from the same root. *Fyale* in Hehe means the daughter of a chief (A. G. O. Hodgson, 'Some Notes on the Wahehe of Mahenge District', *J.R.A.I.*, lvi (1926), p. 40). In Bena *[illegible]* means 'my husband's father or mother' (A. T. and G. M. Culwick, *Ubena of the Rivers*, p. 196). In Ganda *mukyala* means 'lady', mistress of a household and garden (J. Roscoe, *The Baganda*, p. 44). cf. Nyika, *fiala* 'to beget, to bear' (J. L. Krapf and J. Rebmann, *A Nyika-English Dictionary*, edited by T. H. Sparshott, 1887)). [192]

[2] cf. F. R. Lehmann, 'Some field notes on the Nyakyusa', *Sociologus*, New Series, 1951, vol. 5, p. 66. [113]

769 lord', and Kyala the Christian deity. In the sacrifices at Lubaga
643 and the groves of various chiefs, the name Kyala was mentioned repeatedly, as will be shown. Some may interpret this as evidence of a traditional belief in an overriding deity. We think that in most cases it is used in the sense of Kyala the hero, or Kyala 'the lord', but after forty years[1] and more of missionary activity it is not possible to establish exactly what the traditional conception of Kyala was. Moreover, it will be obvious that many of the speakers
[177] quoted in later chapters now entertain religious notions which have been unconsciously, and sometimes profoundly, modified by Christian ideas, a phenomenon especially noteworthy in their references to Kyala.

All the Nyakyusa proper (that is those of Selya, the Lake plain,
769 and Masoko) send cattle to sacrifice at Lubaga (the grove of
782 Lwembe), and several of the Kinga chiefs send there too. The people of Ngonde send to the Kyungu at Mbande, but not to Lubaga, while the people living north of the Songwe did not ever send to Mbande. Some of the people of the Lake plain (MuNgonde) and various Kinga chiefs send to PaliKyala as well as to Lubaga, but the hill people never send to PaliKyala, nor did the Kisi who lived around PaliKyala send to Lubaga. In other words, Lwembe and Kyala were 'brothers' and it was possible to sacrifice to both, though people living close to one centre did not send to the other. All those living south of the Songwe river looked to Mbande; those north of it to Lubaga or PaliKyala. Lwembe, Kyala, and Kyungu were ancestors, honoured primarily by their own descendants or by those of a brother, but they were also divine heroes who might be appealed to by unrelated people through their priests.

The distinction between a 'divine king' and an early ancestor who established a line of chiefs is not a sharp one, and we have indeed been uncertain whether or not to class Mwangomale (4K),[2] the founder (or at least a notable son) of the Kukwe line, with Lwembe and Kyungu. Sacrifices used to be made to Mwangomale at the grove of Kabale by a number of Kukwe chiefs, but we have no evidence either of the formal installation of a living representative in each generation or of sacrifices by unrelated people, and therefore do not include Mwangomale among the 'divine kings'. The early inhabitants of the Rungwe

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[1] Field-work began in 1934.

[2] Numerals followed by K refer to the genealogy of Kukwe chiefs facing p. 27.

area, the Penja, have a grove, Lukata, where they worship their 769
founding ancestor, and the Nyika living on the west bank of the 782
Kiwira river have their grove, Lubaga, twenty miles or more from
the Lubaga in Selya and unconnected with it. A third distinct
group, the Saku, who were the first inhabitants of the south-eastern
part of Rungwe District, have their own grove, Nkeso, where their
progenitors Mwamakula and Mwalukinge were buried. None
of these has anything like the prestige and sanctity of the Lwembe
or the Kyungu, but they are probably the prototype from which
the 'divine kings' developed.

What circumstances produced a 'divine king' at Lubaga and 769
not (so far as our limited knowledge goes) at Kabale we do not 643
know, but we can show how the 'divine kingship' at Mbande,
near the Lake shore, developed rather differently from the [773]
originally similar institution at Lubaga which is forty miles from
the Lake. The Kyungu gradually acquired political power in a
way in which the Lwembe did not. Among the Nyakyusa the [173]
'sons of Lwembe' spread through the country establishing themselves
as independent chiefs. They acknowledged the mystical
supremacy of the Lwembe, and sent cattle to him to sacrifice, but
they were sovereigns in their own territories. Just what this
mystical supremacy of Lwembe implied was and still is often a
matter of dispute, as we shall see. On the death of a chief his
country was normally divided into two independent sections, each
ruled by one of his sons. One heir sometimes fought the other and
reduced him to a subordinate position, but the number of independent
chiefdoms appears to have increased fairly steadily, and
their size did not diminish in proportion, for the Nyakyusa chiefs
have been expanding their area of occupation over a long period, [636]
establishing themselves as rulers over scattered and unorganized [173]
peoples with less developed techniques than their own, or colonizing
unoccupied forest country. Expansion into uncultivated
forest is still going on (1955), and were it not for the vigilance of
the British Administration it is almost certain that the Safwa
people would have been conquered and absorbed like the Penja,
Lugulu, and others before them.[1] In 1936 over 100 independent [634]
chiefdoms were recognized by the people themselves, and they
varied in size from 100 to 3,000 adult men.

In Ngonde the development was different. In the early period 173
all the sons of the Kyungu, save two, were killed, and the territorial 643

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[1] cf. Monica Wilson, *Good Company*, p. 4.

173 rulers were not of the royal blood but 'nobles' (*amakambara*),
643 descendants of the five leading men who had arrived with the
Kyungu, of those he found already occupying the country, and of
those who arrived after him. Later the slaughter of the Kyungu's
[634] sons ceased, and as they grew up they were established as subordinate
chiefs through his territories, gradually taking over power
from the commoners who had previously ruled, by a process
familiar in other parts of Africa.[1] But the 'nobles' retained
considerable power. At Lubaga the descendants of the two
men who had arrived with the first Lwembe, and of some of those
who were there before him, became priests, and priests only; in
Ngonde those of similar origin developed secular, as well as ritual,
functions.

The reasons why the office of Kyungu developed into a paramount
chieftainship, and that of the Lwembe did not, have been
examined in a previous publication,[2] and may therefore be
dealt with very briefly here. The most important factor was that
[439] the Kyungu exported ivory and amassed wealth which was used
to bind territorial rulers to him, while the Lwembe remained cut
[556] off from the outside world and did not trade at all. The geographical
situation largely accounts for this. The ivory of Ngonde
first went north, and later south-east, across the Lake, and
Mbande was well situated for both routes. It lies eight miles
from the Lake and close to a defile which leads from the lakeshore
plain to an open table-land stretching north to Lake
Tanganyika, the very route which engineers later selected for the
Stevenson road. Lubaga, on the other hand, is forty miles from the
Lake and the only routes northward lay over broken country and
passes 8,000 feet high. Giraud remarks in his journal that the
Nyakyusa were the only people he had come across among whom
the chiefs did not claim at least one tusk of every elephant killed;[3]
they did not claim it, for they had no use for the ivory; but the
Kyungu's right to a tusk from every elephant killed was enforced.

The growth of a paramount chieftainship in Ngonde was slow. The early Kyungus lived within an enclosure on Mbande to which only their personal servants and the nobles of Ngonde had

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[113] [1] cf. M. Hunter, *Reaction to Conquest*, p. 380; H. Kuper, *An African Aristocracy*, pp. 13-14; I. Schapera, in *African Political Systems* (edited Fortes and Evans-Pritchard), pp. 60-1.

[2] Godfrey Wilson, *The Constitution of Ngonde*, Rhodes-Livingstone Papers No. 3 (1939).

[3] V. Giraud, *Les Lacs d'Afrique Equatoriale* (1890), p. 186.

access. It was the nobles who were the effective rulers of the 173
country; the divine Kyungu was the centre, a source of mystical 643
power, a numinous symbol of unity, but not a judge or an administrator. Gradually, however, the Kyungus emerged from seclusion; they descended from the hill of Mbande; later they ceased to live within a stockade; in the crises of the Ngoni invasion the Kyungu in office (a notable warrior before his accession to the stool) broke tradition by himself taking arms. 'When the Ngoni came their enmity was like that of the lions and their number like that of the ants, and so Kyungu Mwakasungula, seeing his people were terrified, took up arms in person, and said he would die fighting. And his people heard with awe and astonishment that he himself had come to fight and they determined to die with him.' The next stage was a development of the judicial functions of the Kyungu until, in the present generation, the transformation from god to magistrate was complete.[1]

We turn now to the detailed description of the rituals at each shrine.

(*b*) LUBAGA

Lubaga is a hill dominating the central part of the Nyakyusa 778
valley and on its slopes are signs of old and intensive cultivation. 769
There an early Lwembe (19) lived and was buried, there is the
grove where he is worshipped, and there his descendant chosen as
'the living Lwembe' should build. According to tradition the 'sons [173]
of Lwembe' spread all over the Nyakyusa valley as chiefs, but two
senior lineages, that of Mwampondele (27) and that of Mwakisisya (56), remained near Lubaga, and from them was chosen,
alternately, the living embodiment of the 'divine king', the 769
Lwembe. Men feared greatly to be chosen, for they feared to be 643
'killed by the grove', and indeed the Lwembe rarely lived long. He must not fall ill or all the people of the country would do so likewise; therefore if he ailed he was smothered by his priests who stuffed up his nostrils and other passages of his body. Towards the end of our stay in BuNyakyusa Kasitile made a formal statement on this point in the presence of another priest, Mwamakunda:

> The Lwembes were not sick. They said: 'I am going, I have eaten food at home, at the place of the shade', and they died that day; they

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[1] The change in the position of the Kyungu from the earliest period is discussed in detail by Godfrey Wilson in *The Constitution of Ngonde*.

769 were not ill, they were not troubled as we are. For later in the evening,
643 while the Lwembe was still alive, the commoner priests removed his
nails and hair; they came near and plucked them off. He shouted:
'Who is snatching at me?' They replied: 'No one', and then they
smothered him with cloth in the nostrils and in the anus, and he went
away [i.e. he died]. . . . They did it only when he had initiated it
himself by saying: 'I have eaten food in the land of the shades'; they
[775] did not begin it themselves. . . . They collected the relics in a little
bamboo flask, and a priest treated them so that Lwembe might not
go away with the food to the land of the shades, that the fertility of the
soil (*ilifugo*), this *ifingila*, might always remain above.

[778] These relics, the hair and the nails, were held to be magically
connected through their growth with the growth of crops.

While the Lwembe lived he was secluded—ordinary men did
643 not see him—and he was subject to numerous taboos. For example,
[784] he might not tread in water lest the country should be flooded;
he never bathed in a stream (as Nyakyusa men do daily) and was
carried across any river when travelling; he must not sit on a
green banana leaf lest the bananas in the country should fail,
but was always provided with a skin to sit upon, and he ate only
the middle portion of a banana throwing away the ends for 'if he
finished the whole of a banana he would create hunger in the
country'. No one might grasp his hand, or drink out of the same
calabash as he, save the priests of his own age; if he drank from a
calabash when travelling he took it with him, for 'if he left it
behind he left hunger in that place'.

The selection of the Lwembe was in the hands of the hereditary
priests of Lubaga and the hereditary Kinga priests, who come
from BuKinga to sacrifice at Lubaga. The man they choose must be
of good character—at the time we were in BuNyakyusa the only
willing candidate was rejected because 'he is a bad man, a thief,
they refuse to have a thief as priest'—he must exhibit in his own
home the power of fertility. 'They don't catch just anyone, but
[842] one with children, and cattle, and fertility of the fields in his own
homestead. If the man taken as chief is not fertile and rich there
will be many sterile people in the homesteads, and much disease
and hunger.'

When the priests had decided upon the man of their choice,
they seized him and set him upon a sacred skin and a pad of
leaves; and it was believed that once he had been set thereon he
[761] would die if he refused office; tales were told of a younger brother

(28) of Mwampondele (27) who had fled from the stool and had died. 643 [761]

The chosen man was secluded in a hut, lying on a litter with his priests, who kept him company (*ukumpanja*), just as a nubile girl is secluded and lies on a litter with her maids, or a young chief with his village headmen at his 'coming out'. Here is the account of Mwasesi, the oldest of the priests of Lubaga (a man of about seventy-five) who saw the installation of the last Lwembe, Mwakisisya (56).

> A skin and a head-pad of leaves (*ingata*)[1] are brought by the Kinga. The priests catch the chief and set him on these; and then he cannot run away, it is taboo. I, Mwasesi, would sit on one side of him and my friend on the other, and force him to sit on them. Then we plead with him and say: 'You are the Lion, the Leopard, the Snake, the Banana, the Bean, the Millet, the Cow Pea, and the Lentil.' (Lentils are very important, you know, because it is with them that we celebrate the ritual, and with cow peas.) Then, after a time, he says: 'Leave me', and he goes to find the cow; this cow is just for the priests to eat that night. Then we take him into a certain house, cut leaves and spread them for a litter; and we keep him company there on the litter for some time. Then he sends messages to Mwakyusa (38), to Mwankyuse (33), and to Mwakisambe (30), and the Kinga [i.e. their descendants]. Each chief who is Lwembe's descendant sends commoner priests . . . they gather to induct him into Lubaga, he who was in the house. It is just like the 'coming out' ritual for a young chief. 643 788

The Lwembe in his own person, and in a lesser degree his 'sons' 643 who are ordinary chiefs, are identified with the power of growth. Not only must the Lwembe not die with the breath still in his body, or with his hair and nails still upon it, but when he is chosen the priests test whether his reign will be long or short [787] (perhaps whether they can permit him to live or not) by taking a little millet, putting it in a banana leaf and watching to see whether it sprouts or not. 'If it sprouts and grows at once he will live long; if it does not, he will be the priest [i.e. divine king] but will die very soon.'

Because the power of making rain, food, milk and children lay 643 in the body of the Lwembe he was fearful and terrible. 'No one 784 built close to him, it was taboo, no one touched Mwakisisya (56) . . . if he wished to make it rain he would make it rain all

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[1] The Kinga priests spoke of a cloth to wear and a stool and an axe which were kept in the inner part of the hut of the Lwembe's great wife and which no man, save a priest of Lubaga, might see.

643 round him and sit at home in the middle in the sun. . . . All the
784 old chiefs inspired fear (*bapala*). It used to be taboo to walk near
the house of a chief and approach him unless taken by a village
headman . . . nowadays men walk about and enter his home and
[177] even steal his food.'[1] The power came partly from his position
as the living Lwembe, and partly from the medicines with which
he was treated, especially the terrible *ifingila*.

643 The 'divine king' who came as a conqueror bringing iron is also
associated with victory in battle. Still today a brave fighter is
[554] saluted as 'Lwembe', and an iron spear is one of the emblems of
chieftainship.

The Lwembe was himself a priest—he is often referred to as
643 *unyago*—but he was assisted by commoners. There is a hereditary
793 keeper of the grove of Lubaga named Kissoule who is the descend-
782 ant of that Kissoule the commoner who fled from BuKinga with
Lwembe. It is he who conducts the sacrifices, who daubs the participants with medicines before they enter, and who protects the groves. 'If by mistake the grove was a little burnt then the people here paid a beast to Kissoule, it was his to eat as he liked.' Others of the priests say that Lwembe found their ancestors at Lubaga; they are 'owners of the soil' there, and one of them, Mwasesi, could give us the names of six generations of ancestors who had been priests of Lubaga before him. But the bulk of the commoner priests are not hereditary at all, they are surviving village headmen (or their heirs) of the most recently dead Lwembe.

The success of the sacrifices at Lubaga was held to depend upon the proper co-operation of chiefs and priests: first, on the Lwembe himself (the shortage of food among the Kinga, and of milk among the Nyakyusa, while we were there, was attributed by Kasitile to the fact that there was no living Lwembe); secondly on the commoner priests of Lubaga; thirdly on the commoner Kinga priests; fourthly on Kasitile (86) and certain other priests of Selya; and fifthly on the chiefs of the Nyakyusa and the Kinga who provided the offerings. 'Can a priest celebrate alone?' said Kasitile. 'No, the ritual depends on the chiefs.' The celebrations thus linked together chiefs and people, as well as Kinga and Nyakyusa, and numerous different Nyakyusa chiefdoms. The hereditary Kinga priests live in the country of the Kinga chief Mwakalukwa and

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[1] This is inconsistent with Kasitile's statement quoted above. The general opinion was that chiefs were more powerful than formerly, but the living Lwembe less so.

'Lwembe listens to him'. 'If Kinga messengers went [to Lubaga] 643
without going through Mwakalukwa's country there would be 793
much hunger. . . . Once Mwemusi and Kyelela [Kinga chiefs] 782
conspired together and sent off men with hoes to Lubaga, without
reference to Mwakalukwa. They carried ten hoes. But when they
got back disease killed many in the country, and they paid
Mwakalukwa and did not do it again.'

It is true that an independent Nyakyusa chief *can* send an offering to Lubaga on his own; it is received by the priests of Lubaga
and sacrificed in the grove, and such a sacrifice is held to be in
some measure efficient, but drought or sickness in the country as [753]
a whole is often attributed to one or other of the participating [731]
groups failing to play their part. Moreover, such a failure is
thought to be dangerous to the chief or priest who neglects his
duties, as we shall see in the case of Kasitile.

The priests of Lubaga ministered to the Lwembe but they had 643
also the right and duty of admonishing him if he did wrong, just [793]
as village headmen have the right and duty of admonishing their
chief. If the Lwembe broke a taboo 'then Kissoule and the other [784]
priests would be very angry and reproach him for bathing and
making hunger, and he would pay them a bull in recompense.'
Even the 'divine king' was subject to the rule of law. All through
the political organization and ritual patterns of the Nyakyusa [642]
there is this balance and reciprocity between chiefs and commoners and it is here that the Nyakyusa system differs radically from that described by Professor Frankfort for ancient Egypt.[1] The heroes had brought the gift of chieftainship to the Nyakyusa but it had not ousted another, perhaps older, tradition of democratic leadership; instead, the two were welded in a partnership which, to the Nyakyusa, is so much part of the necessary order of the universe that they speak of commoner priests and headmen as 'wives' of the chiefs. The Kissoule in office is 'the wife' of the Lwembe.

In the grove at Lubaga sacrifices of black cattle and sheep and 782
libations of millet beer were offered by the Nyakyusa, while the 789
Kinga brought hoes, bamboo beer, salt, the sacred drum *ngoma*, and 751
ifika, that is, marvels whose nature, Kasitile averred, he did not
know himself. The shrine of Lubaga, and the actors and actions connected with it, are miraculous and terrible, terrible even to the actors themselves who tremble when they enter the grove, and

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[1] H. Frankfort, *Kingship and the Gods* (1948), pp. 51-6.

9: Wilson
173
● 643

FN17 Ngonde
Nyakyusa

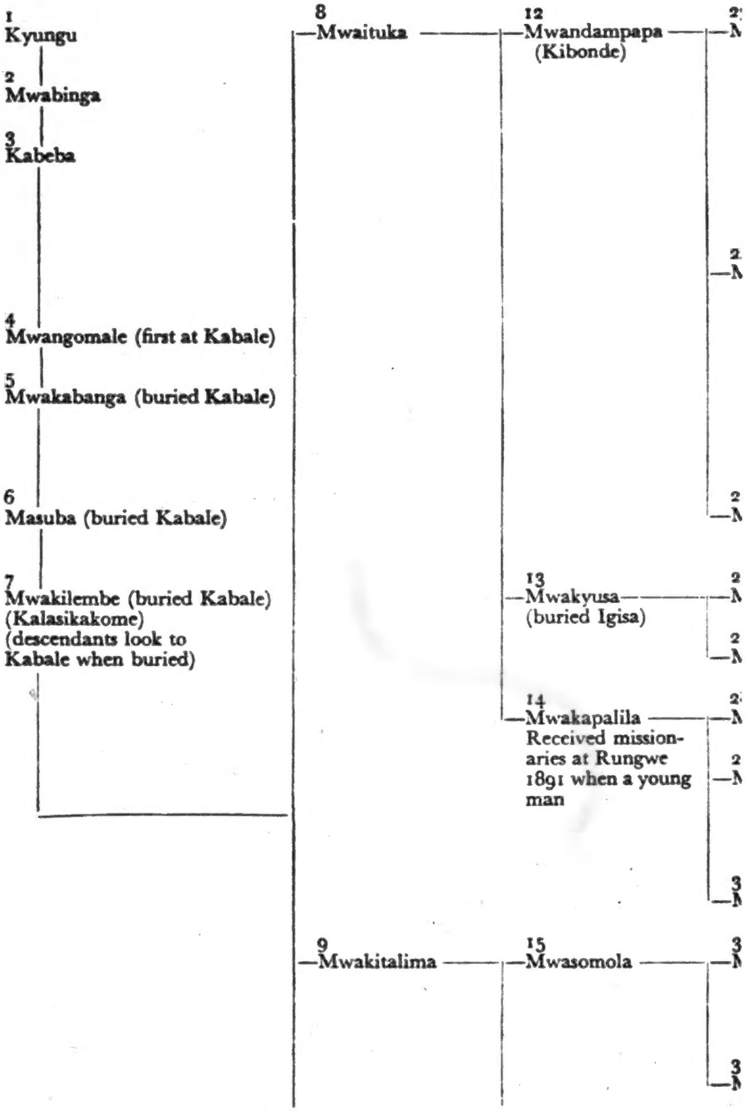
Chart showing position of sections of chart on "Chiefs of Kukwe's Line." (Facing p. 27)

A	B	C
D	E	F

9: Wilson E-5 (1934-1955) 1959

FN17 Ngonde FN17
Nyakyusa

173
643


1 Kyungu
2 Mwabinga
3 Kabeba
4 Mwangomale (first at Kabale)
5 Mwakabanga (buried Kabale)
6 Masuba (buried Kabale)
7 Mwakilembe (buried Kabale) (Kalasikakome) (descendants look to Kabale when buried)
8 Mwaituka
9 Mwakitalima
12 Mwandampapa (Kibonde)
13 Mwakyusa (buried Igisa)
14 Mwakapalila Received missionaries at Rungwe 1891 when a young man
15 Mwasomola

[facing p.27; section A]

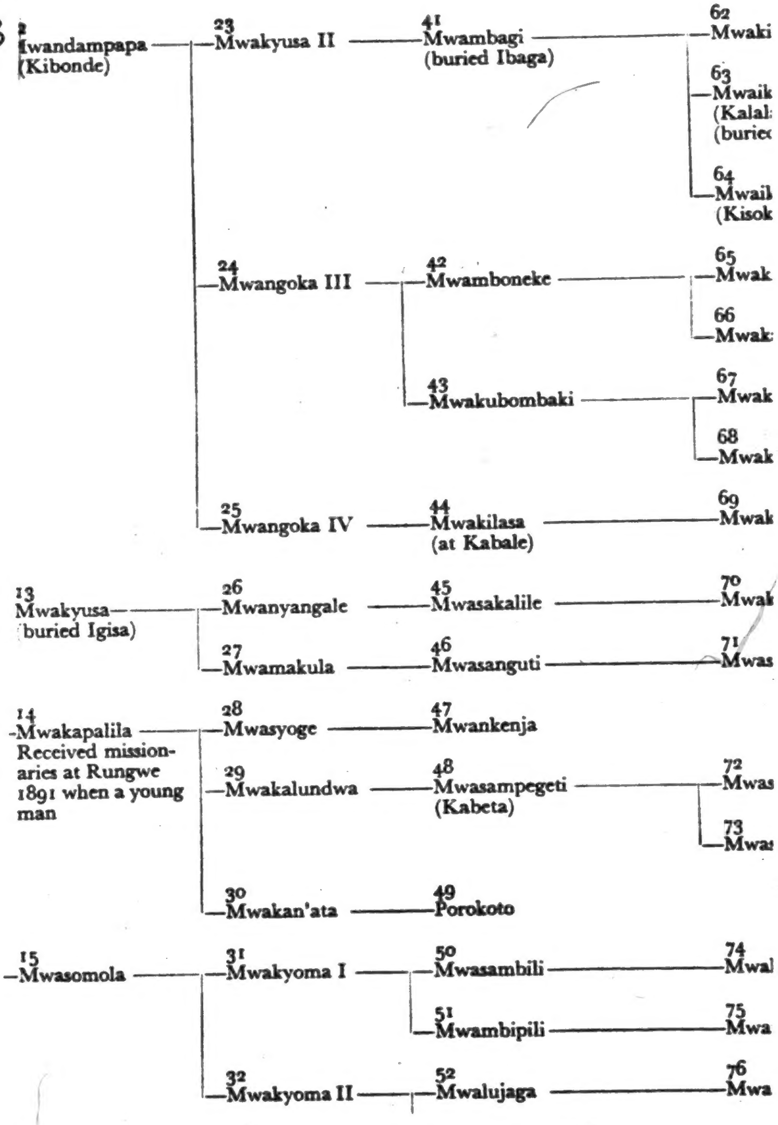
9: Wilson E-5 (1934-1955) 1959

FN17 Ngonde FN17

Nyakyusa

CHIEFS OF THE KUKWE LINE

173
643

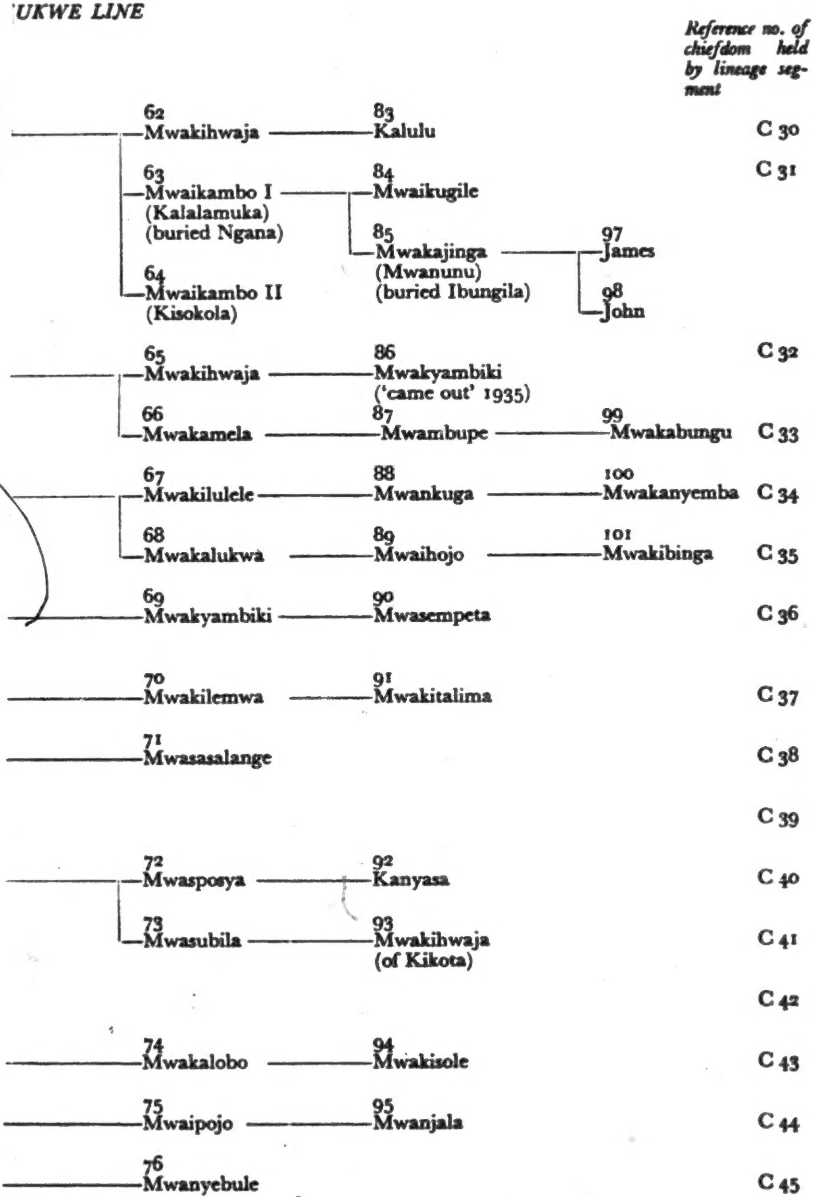


2 Kwandampapa (Kibonde)
23 Mwakyusa II
41 Mwambagi (buried Ibaga)
62 Mwaki
63 Mwaik (Kala (burie
64 Mwail (Kisok
24 Mwangoka III
42 Mwamboneke
65 Mwak
66 Mwak
43 Mwakubombaki
67 Mwak
68 Mwak
25 Mwangoka IV
44 Mwakilasa (at Kabale)
69 Mwak
13 Mwakyusa (buried Igisa)
26 Mwanyangale
45 Mwasakalile
70 Mwak
27 Mwamakula
46 Mwasanguti
71 Mwas
14 Mwakapalila Received missionaries at Rungwe 1891 when a young man
28 Mwasyoge
47 Mwankenja
29 Mwakalundwa
48 Mwasampegeti (Kabeta)
72 Mwas
73 Mwas
30 Mwakan'ata
49 Porokoto
15 Mwasomola
31 Mwakyoma I
50 Mwasambili
74 Mwal
51 Mwambipili
75 Mwa
32 Mwakyoma II
52 Mwalujaga
76 Mwa

[facing p. 27; section B]

173
643

UKWE LINE

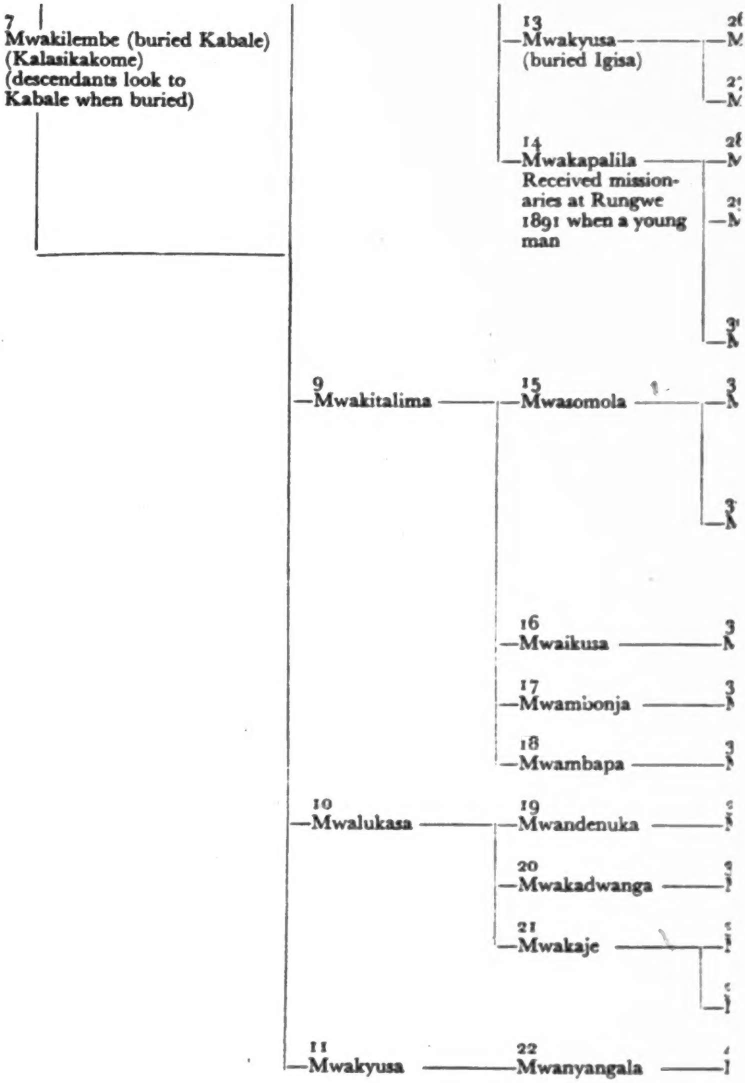

Reference no. of chiefdom held by lineage segment
62 Mwakihwaja
83 Kalulu
C 30
63 Mwaikambo I (Kalalamuka) (buried Ngana)
84 Mwaikugile
C 31
85 Mwakajinga (Mwanunu) (buried Ibungila)
97 James
98 John
64 Mwaikambo II (Kisokola)
65 Mwakihwaja
86 Mwakyambiki ('came out' 1935)
C 32
66 Mwakamela
87 Mwambupe
99 Mwakabungu
C 33
67 Mwakilulele
88 Mwankuga
100 Mwakanyemba
C 34
68 Mwakalukwa
89 Mwaihojo
101 Mwakibinga
C 35
69 Mwakyambiki
90 Mwasempeta
C 36
70 Mwakilemwa
91 Mwakitalima
C 37
71 Mwasasalange
C 38
C 39
72 Mwasposya
92 Kanyasa
C 40
73 Mwasubila
93 Mwakihwaja (of Kikota)
C 41
C 42
74 Mwakalobo
94 Mwakisole
C 43
75 Mwaipojo
95 Mwanjala
C 44
76 Mwanyebule
C 45

[facing p.27; section C]

9: Wilson E-5 (1934-1955) 1959

FN17 Ngonde FN17
Nyakyusa

173
643


7
Mwakilembe (buried Kabale)
(Kalasikakome)
(descendants look to
Kabale when buried)
13
Mwakyusa
(buried Igisa)
14
Mwakapalila
Received mission-
aries at Rungwe
1891 when a young
man
9
Mwakitalima
15
Mwasomola
16
Mwaikusa
17
Mwambonja
18
Mwambapa
10
Mwalukasa
19
Mwandenuka
20
Mwakadwanga
21
Mwakaje
11
Mwakyusa
22
Mwanyangala

Based on genealogies of Kukwe chiefs kindly given me by Mr. John Mwaikambo
the order and number of names before Mwakilembe is very doubtful. I have not pe

[facing p.27; section D]

173
643

9: Wilson E-5 (1934-1955) 1959

FN17 Ngonde FN17
Nyakyusa

13 Mwakyusa (buried Igisa)	26 Mwanyangale	45 Mwasakalile	70 Mwal
	27 Mwamakula	46 Mwasanguti	71 Mwa
14 Mwakapalila Received missionaries at Rungwe 1891 when a young man	28 Mwasyoge	47 Mwankenja	
	29 Mwakalundwa	48 Mwasampegeti (Kabeta)	72 Mwa 73 Mwa
	30 Mwakan'ata	49 Porokoto	
15 Mwasomola	31 Mwakyoma I	50 Mwasambili	74 Mwal
		51 Mwambipili	75 Mwai
	32 Mwakyoma II	52 Mwalujaga	76 Mwa
		53 Mwasandube	77 Mwa
6 waikusa	33 Mwakifumbwa	54 Mwaipwisi	78 Mwa
7 wambonja	34 Mwakibelwa	55 Mwaiswaswa	
8 wambapa	35 Mwakyomo	56 Mwakalombwe	79 Mwa
9 wandenuka	36 Mwaitege	57 Mwasamberenge	
wakadwanga	37 Mwangosi	58 Mwabongo	80 Mwa
wakaje	38 Mwakajela	59 Mwasele	
	39 Mwakatobe	60 Mwamboneke	81 Mwa
wanyangala	40 Mwasakalili	61 Mwakilima	82 Mwa

r. John Mwaikambo (98) and Mr. Ernest Kyungu, both of whom had made a
oubtful. I have not personally checked this genealogy with a member of each line.

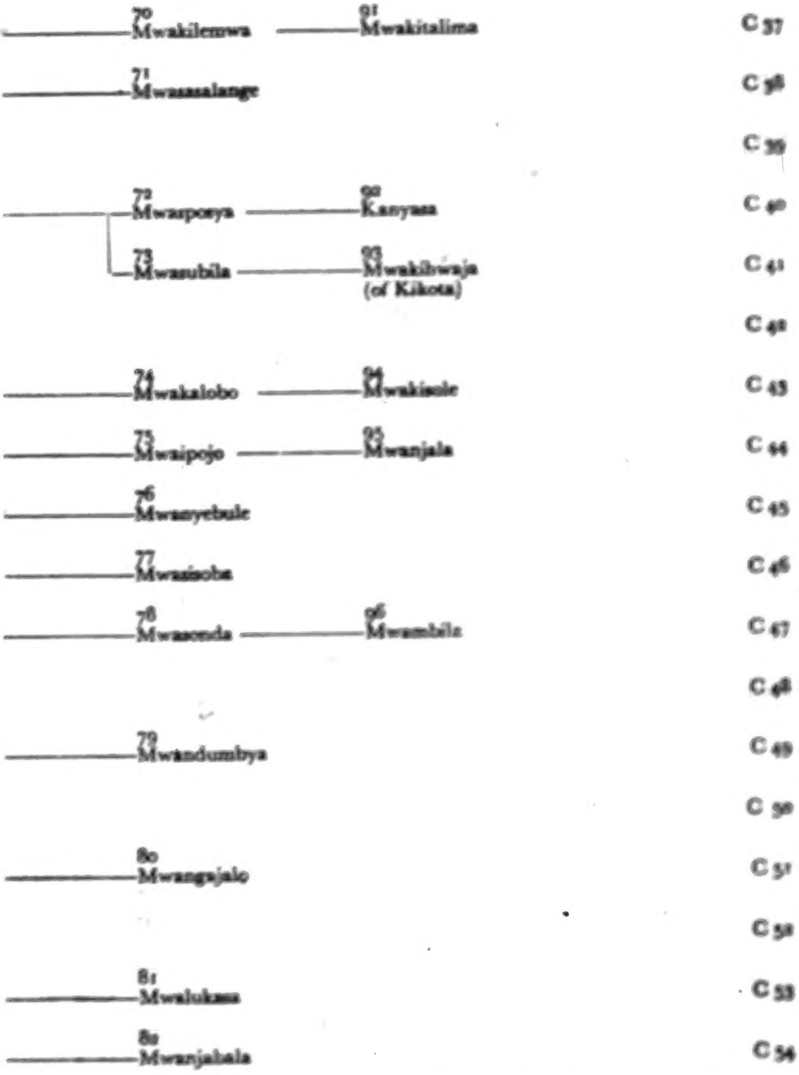
[facing p. 27; section E]

9: Wilson E-5 (1934-1955) 1959

FN17 Ngonde FN17

Nyakyusa

173
643


70 Mwakilemwa
91 Mwakitalima
C 37
71 Mwaasalange
C 38
C 39
72 Mwaiposya
92 Kanyasa
C 40
73 Mwasubila
93 Mwakibwaja (of Kikota)
C 41
C 42
74 Mwakalobo
94 Mwakisole
C 43
75 Mwaipojo
95 Mwanjala
C 44
76 Mwanyebule
C 45
77 Mwaisoba
C 46
78 Mwasonda
96 Mwambila
C 47
C 48
79 Mwandumbya
C 49
C 50
80 Mwangajalo
C 51
C 52
81 Mwalukasa
C 53
82 Mwanjabala
C 54

hom had made a special study of the subject. They were not in complete agreement and ember of each line.

[facing p.27; section F]

778 Lwembe, and the grove of the first Lwembe himself, the last being
782 the most sacred. In it stands a miraculous tree from which, the
priests aver, sometimes comes sap like water, and sometimes blood.
'If it is watery there will be a plague of ulcers in the country—
[753] running sores—if it is blood there will be dysentery. But as soon
[755] as the hoes are placed in the grove, or the black bull is killed,
then the sick begin to recover.'

Godfrey Wilson attended three celebrations at Lubaga, and we
788 heard of five others which occurred during our period of field-
work. The ritual is esoteric, that is to say, only the representative
of Lwembe and his priests participate, and the details are not
revealed to others, but its occurrence is widely known and dis-
cussed among older men.

The celebrations observed were modified by the fact that no one
[643] had been installed as Lwembe since the death of Mwakisisya
[793] (56) before 1914. The possible candidates whom the priests had
wished to instal had refused—'they feared the grove'; the only
[177] one who was said to be willing was rejected on account of his
character. The priests gave 'European times' as the reason for
there being no Lwembe. 'When the country was ours before you
Europeans came' the elected candidate was compelled to accept
office. On the death of Mwakisisya, the Kinga priests ordered that
his senior son Mwanjala I (77) should take his place, and when
Mwanjala I died (three years after his father) his full brother
Mwanjala II (78) succeeded. He took a leading part in the rituals
observed, but was not an anointed Lwembe. The priests ex-
plained: 'We fear, thinking that if a chief is seized [and compelled
to sit on the stool] he will complain to the Government and we
shall be punished.' During the period of German rule they had
been threatened with imprisonment if they continued the ritual . . .
'we feared and stole through the country by night'. . . . And there
is still much secrecy about its truncated celebration. Since the
journey down 'the road of Lwembe' with the drum traditionally
involved human sacrifice, and the Lwembe was smothered when
ailing, there is an absolute incompatibility between a full cele-
bration of the ritual and European administration.

The influence of the Christian minority is also considerable. The
177 view of most Nyakyusa Christians with whom we discussed
788 communal rituals is that they used to be efficient, but are so no
longer, since men have been taught a better way of approaching
God. 'God said: "They are mistaken but in their hearts they are

looking for me", and so if there was much heat he would send rain.' But this no longer happens. 177 788

At the same time both pagans and Christians tell a myth of how a European missionary, Rev. — Jauer (Mwaisumo), who visited the grove of Lubaga intending to remove the hoes in the grove to demonstrate the falsehood of the ritual, was confounded by a miracle (*ifika*). [773] [789]

Once the missionary Mwaisumo wished to go and see the grove of Lubaga. He was warned that if he entered he would flee because there were many marvels there, and the rain would catch him. He said: 'Oh, I shall go, nothing will happen.' So he went and entered the grove, and he found many hoes, some standing up, some lying down, and some of them had 'eyes'. He seized one to take it away, then there was a crash of thunder, and he was afraid and fled. When he ran out of the grove the rain fell in torrents. It is said that he was so frightened he left his jacket behind. From that time people said that indeed there are miracles at Lubaga. 539

'European times' is given as the reason for sacrifices being less frequent and regular than formerly. The occasions were, and still are: any period of hunger or scarcity, such as the Kinga regularly experience during the dry season, and the Nyakyusa also complain of at that time; any irregular misfortune such as a failure of the rains, a plague of locusts or an epidemic; and any prediction of hunger or disease by a prophet (*unsololi* or *unkungulula*). But the chiefs are said to be more reluctant to provide the cattle for sacrifice than formerly, and less quickly influenced by the actual occurrence of hunger or by prophecy that famine is imminent. Nevertheless they still 'treat the earth' (*ukutendeleya unnfu*) by sending a black cow to Lubaga when hunger presses. 782 [177]

According to Kasitile (86) and Mwamakunda (his fellow priest) no ritual could be performed in the grove of the first Lwembe when he had no living representative. Formerly, the Kissoule in office and another priest penetrated alone, and there bound a live sheep and left it to bleat until a python took it. 'It is Kyala, he turns himself into a python' (*Jo kyala: ipela seta*). Here Kasitile used *kyala* in the sense of 'the lord' and he was referring to Lwembe. According to another informant, when the heir to any priesthood connected with Lubaga is installed he should sleep in the grove enclosed in a stout wicker hut, and remain there until the python of the grove comes and *licks* him. The case was cited of a priest who had lain captive for two weeks 643 793 782

782 [643] [793] and come home 'very thin', but just when this happened was not clear.

We turn now to the account of the three sacrifices witnessed at Lubaga which illustrates (*a*) the occasions of celebration, (*b*) the procedure, and (*c*) the tensions between the participants. In the ritual described on pp. 35-8, Mwakilima (111) complained that most of the chiefs of Selya did not even recognize his ritual supremacy by sending cattle to kill at Lubaga, but Kasitile the priest retorted that Mwakilima himself, in his capacity as a chief, was slow to provide the cattle for sacrifice required by his own priests.

In July 1935, two Kinga priests, Kikungubeja and Nsyanigwa, came from the Kinga chief Mwakalukwa to Lubaga, with an offering of hoes. A bull, provided by Mwakilima (111) as chief of Lwembe's line, was then killed beside a tree planted at the 'coming out' of Mwakisisya (56), the last Lwembe, on the site on which the house of his second wife, Kitega, was built, and the meat was thrown into the old banana grove close by. At the end of September the same two priests returned (each accompanied by a grandson) bringing bamboo beer and 10s. and a hoe with which to buy a bull to sacrifice again, for the Kinga were suffering [787] hunger and a prophet in their country had gone into a trance and prophesied cold, disease, and hunger, and urged the chiefs to pray. No fault had brought the hunger, they said, but 'the shades wish a cow. The shades say: "Formerly we ate much, now you do not kill cows for us, indeed we wish to eat. . . ." Therefore much hunger affects our country. It is on this account that we Kinga come with a bull and hoes. When the blood of the sacrifice soaks into the earth then the shades are satisfied, and they also receive the meat from the upper foreleg (*ijammajo*).'[1]

The initiative came from the Kinga who were suffering most severely, but the Nyakyusa were also complaining of scarcity. [731] The weather was very hot and dry and Mwakilima (108) remarked to Kasitile (86) the priest, who had come up to Lubaga for the sacrifice: 'You have killed us with this sun.' He was referring to the unusually small yield of early maize and beans which had been scorched by the drought. Kasitile replied: 'No, all of us [are responsible], the sun has hated us.' Both men smiled.

Five days after the Kinga reached Lubaga (26th September 1935) the sacrifice was offered up. The men concerned gathered in

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[1] The sacred cut. cf. Monica Wilson, *Rituals of Kinship among the Nyakyusa*, p. 96.

782 children, not the married ones with wives. Kissoule and I both
796 have our children anointed now.'

[783] This ritual was not complete because Mwanjala shirked the
[643] crucial act of remaining in the grove until a python licked him.
[793] The Kinga priests were continually nagging at the Nyakyusa for
their failure to provide an acceptable Lwembe, but it is doubtful
[177] whether in 1935 Mwanjala II would have been acceptable to any
of them since he was old and ailing. It was Mwakilima (111) that
men wanted and he steadily refused to be installed.

[787] The next ritual observed at Lubaga was in March 1937. An
ordinary commoner of Selya (not a priest) named Kijaja had been
prophesying repeatedly: 'I do not sleep, you will not eat the
crops you hoe if you do not go to Lubaga.' He was taken to his
village headman and thence to the chief Mwaihojo (147) who
finally, two years after he had begun prophesying, agreed to find
a bull. Word then came to Kasitile (86) who notified the commoner priests of chief Mwaipopo (116) and sent a message to the
priests of Lubaga. Kasitile (86), together with three other priests
of Selya (Mwalukuta, Nyama, Mwamakunda) and Godfrey
Wilson, set off early one morning from Kasitile's house to take the
bull (brown streaked with black, called *ingombe isolola*) to Lubaga.
On the way they called in at Munyoso's house, where the Kinga
stop on their journey to pour a libation of beer (*vide supra*, p. 27).
Kasitile asked Munyoso, 'Shall the bull enter?' and he replied,
'Yes, let it come into the house', so it was tied up inside while the
party talked with Munyoso. He was sick and did not want to
accompany them. The others pressed him, and at first he refused.
Whereupon Mwalukuta said: 'Very well, then, we are at your
place, let the bull return and we will go another day', in other
words, refusing to go without him. 'No, that is taboo,' said
[784] Kasitile, 'once the bull has faced towards Lubaga and entered a
house here it is taboo for it to turn back. The shades will be
angry.' And so Munyoso went with them.

On the way they passed a group of men hoeing hard. One of them called out: 'Where are you going with that bull? Where are you off enjoying yourselves?' 'Ah, you fellows,' answered Kasitile, 'do you ask where we are going? We visit where our fathers always did.' They understood at once. 'Oh thank you, thank you,' they cried. 'You,' went on Kasitile, 'do you call that work? Are you growing your own food? No, you lie still and eat without effort. It is *we* who exert ourselves for you' (implying

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643
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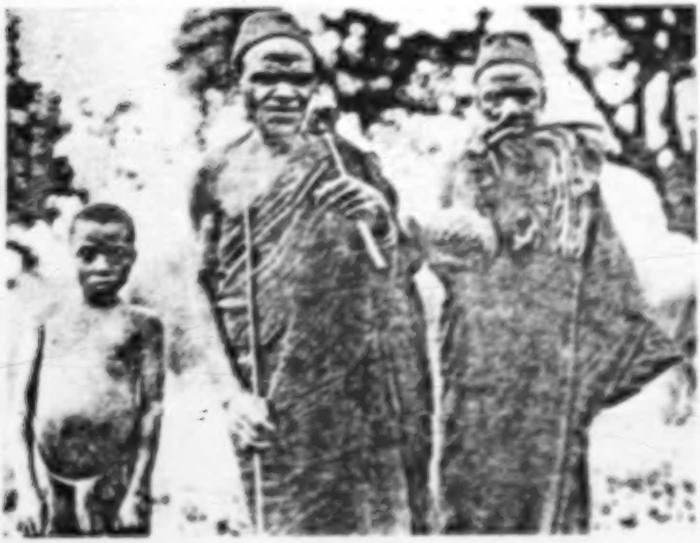
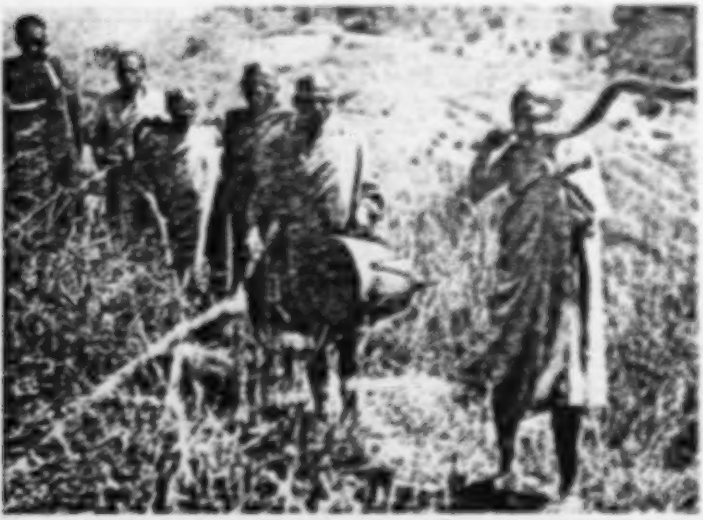
[415]



5a. PRIESTS OF LUBAGA (KINGA)

[534]
[778]



5b. KINGA PRIESTS WITH HORN AND DRUM

[Facing p. 39]

ndicated (*vide supra*, p. 35). And, as we shall see later, he also 771]
uspected that his quarrels with the Kinga priests and with the [753]
ommoner priests of Mwaipopo's chiefdom made him ill. [578]

Chiefs, and even the 'divine king' himself, lived in fear of the 649
gitimate anger of their people, more particularly of their village 753
eadmen and priests, believing that such anger would bring them
ickness, and this belief gave headmen and priests a very strong [622]
old over their lord. How it worked was illustrated by an incident
t Lubaga.

Mwanjala II (78) remarked to Mwakilima (111): 'I sent to summon [796]
Mwaesi (a commoner priest) for the ritual tomorrow but he refused
aying: "I shall not come." He is angry because he was not called to
he ritual at your home, nor was he told formally when the Kinga
ame, or when Mwaipaja [G.W.] came.' Mwakilima (111) asked:
Will you pay him?' [i.e. admit your mistake and offer him com-
ensation]. Mwanjala replied that he would, and Mwakilima ex-
ressed disgust. One of the Kinga priests who was listening broke
nto the conversation: 'Ignore him if he refuses to come. If it were us [754]
e should leave him and celebrate without him, but you Nyakyusa
re all witches, and you fear to ignore a man who refuses to come to a
itual saying that he will bewitch you. You are cowards, you are!'

At this Godfrey Wilson asked if there were no witchcraft in BuKinga.
The Kinga priest replied: 'There is some, but if the chief gives orders to
elebrate a ritual and someone refuses to come we ignore him, and
elebrate without him. You Nyakyusa *pay* a man for doing wrong. A
an refuses to come when he should and then you *pay* him! If you are
fraid of witchcraft why not finish the ritual and send his portion of
eat to him afterwards?'

Another priest objected: 'Then he would say it was too small a
iece.'

The commoner priests then could control even the Lwembe (for
Mwanjala II acted in the place of the Lwembe though he was
ot installed), but at the same time the mystical power of the
Lwembe was feared both by ordinary chiefs and commoners.
Mwaijonga (82), who ruled before the European occupation,
nsulted and fought Mwakisisya the Lwembe (36), and killed
ome of his men, because 'Lwembe had spoiled the year', but
e sent back the cattle that were seized.

n the old days it did not matter killing the Lwembe's men (in war), but [727]
o one dared to take his cattle, they feared lest he would spoil the year
nd send too much rain, and a plague of ulcers, and cause the cattle to [789]

643 753 [781] die. . . . People feared very much because the Lwembe had medicines for smearing on his body, which could cause rain, sickness, food, ulcers, anything.

And they feared lest they might get ulcers if they killed one of Lwembe's men 'on the road'—i.e. a traveller. In short, Lwembe's mystical power afforded the first feeble beginnings of a 'king's peace' in a land of warring chiefdoms, where strangers were fair game.

(c) MBANDE

778 Mbande is a hill on the plain of north Nyasaland with a commanding view of the surrounding country and well suited to defence. The west side is precipitous and below the scarp edge there used to be a marsh; to the north the hill is protected by a wide reach of the Lukulu river. It is a sacred place and for many
643 generations was the home of the 'divine king', the Kyungu. Like the Lwembe he was the living representative of a hero, and was selected by a group of hereditary nobles from one of two related lineages, the office alternating (if suitable candidates were available) between the two. They sought a big man,[1] one who had begotten children and whose sons were already married, not a young man for, the nobles said, 'young men always want war, and destroy the country'. He must be a man of wisdom (*gwa mahala*) and generous in feeding his people.

The Kyungu's life was governed by taboos even more rigorous than those surrounding the Lwembe. He must not fall ill, or
[784] [753] suffer a wound, or even scratch himself and bleed a little, for his ill health, or his blood falling on the earth would bring sickness to the whole country. 'Men feared when Kyungu's blood fell on the ground, they said, "It is his life".' 'If he had a headache his wives (if they loved him) told him not to mention it, they hid his illness; but if the nobles entered and found him ill they dug the grave and put him in it, saying, "He is the ruler (*ntemi*), it's taboo for him to be ill". Then he thought: "Perhaps it is so" (with a gesture of resignation).'

751 643 [841] [644] [753] Great precautions were taken to preserve his health. He lived in a separate house with his powerful medicines. His food was prepared by boys below the age of puberty lest a menstruating woman, or a youth who had lain with a woman, should touch it and so bring sickness upon him; and his numerous wives were

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[1] [illegible] *umunnu*. It implies both big physically and important.

immured in the royal enclosure—a great stockade—and jealously 643
guarded, for any infidelity on their part was thought to make [644]
their husband ill, and with him the whole country. [753]

When the Kyungu did fall ill he was smothered by the nobles
who lived around him at Mbande, and buried in great secrecy, 643
with a score or more of living persons—slaves—in the grave 766
beneath him, and one or two wives and the sons of commoners above. And in the midst of all this slaughter the nobles brought a
sheep to look into the grave that the dead Kyungu might be [825]
gentle (*mololo*) like the sheep!

The living Kyungu was thought to create food and rain, and his breath and the growing parts of his body—his hair and nails and
the constantly replaced mucus of his nose—were believed to be [778]
magically connected with the fertility of the Ngonde plain. When he was killed his nostrils were stopped so that he was buried 'with the breath in his body'; while portions of his hair and nails and of
his nasal mucus were taken from him beforehand and buried by [789]
the nobles of Ngonde in the black mud near the river. This was 'to defend the country against hunger', 'to close up the land, to keep it rich and heavy and fertile as it was when he himself lived in it'.

His death was kept secret—a relatively easy matter since he 643
lived in seclusion—and one of the nobles (*Ngosi*) impersonated 768
him wearing his clothes. After a month or two when the nobles had decided whom to choose as the new Kyungu, the luckless man was summoned to Mbande: 'Your father calls you.' 'Then he came with his companions and entered the house to make obeisance; they seized him and put the sacred cloth on him and set him on the stool "Kisumbi", saying, "Thou Kyungu, thou art he", and he became the Kyungu. Then they struck the drum, Mwenekelwa, and everyone knew that the Kyungu had died and another had been installed.' Men feared greatly to be seized as the Kyungu, just as they feared to be seized as the Lwembe, because the life of a divine king was short. Ngonde historians quote a number of cases of sons of the Kyungu who fled to escape being set on the stool; once they had sat on it they dared not flee lest they die.

Though[1] the early Kyungus had lived on the stony top of 643
Mbande none of them had been buried there, for 'the ground was 778
766

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[1] The following section is quoted, with additions and amendments, from Godfrey Wilson, *The Constitution of Ngonde*, pp. 29 ff.

643 too hard to dig graves in'. They and their successors were all
778 buried in the valley, each in a different spot. Over their graves
trees were planted and grew up to form a ring of sacred groves
[766] round Mbande. Each grove has a name and the Kyungu who is
buried there is usually referred to, not by his own name, but by
that of the grove where he lies. . . . We traced sixteen groves in
the plain surrounding Mbande and the nobles who pointed them
out remembered participating in celebrations at all except that
of the last Kyungu. The ruling Kyungu and the spirits of his
[769] dead predecessors were believed to form one divine company, the
anger of any one of whom had terrible effects, and both living and
dead were placated with offerings.

In time of drought the nobles of Ngonde would go to a diviner
778 to inquire who it was who was angry; they would mention all the
787 names of the sacred groves of the Kyungus in turn and he would
782 tell them that it was so and so. They would inform the living
Kyungu and he would give them a bull or a sheep, together with
821 some beer—they would take one of the pots of beer from his own
643 house, brought by his people as tribute. And he would give them
some flour and cloths also. Then they would go with them into
the grove and build a miniature hut. Next they would kill the
beast and hang some of the meat up on a tree—the rest they
would eat later outside the grove. Then they would tear up the
cloths and fasten some of the pieces on to the hut in the grove—
an action they would explain as 'giving him cloths'. And finally,
they would pour out some of the beer and the flour. Nearly
always, in time of drought, they would thus build a hut and make
an offering in the grove of the Kyungu whom the diviner had
mentioned.

But occasionally, if one of the chiefs had recently insulted the
643 Kyungu, they concluded that it was the living Kyungu himself
688 who was angry. They would go to a diviner and mention all the
787 names of the dead Kyungus, but he would refuse to accept any
689 of them: 'No . . . no.' And at length he would tell them that it
was the living Kyungu who was angry because so-and-so had insulted
821 him. Then there would be no sacrifice at the grove at all,
but the nobles of Ngonde would go to the one who had insulted
the Kyungu and charge him with it, asking him what he meant
by thus killing them all, would not the whole land starve? And
643 so the wrongdoer would take a cow to the Kyungu who, there-
821 upon, would address the nobles of Ngonde, saying: 'If it was my

anger which brought the drought then it will rain (for I am no 643
longer angry). But if the rain does not come then it cannot have
been my anger, it must have been someone [of the dead Kyungus] [821]
whom you forgot to ask about.' 'And if, after that, the rain came
soon, then it was not likely that anyone would insult the Kyungu
again.' If, however, it did not rain, then the nobles of Ngonde
would approach the Kyungu once more and ask why it had not
rained. He would say that he did not know, that he himself was
certainly not angry, and they must have forgotten someone, they
had better go and divine again. And so they would, and then the [787]
diviner would tell them that it was so-and-so (one of the dead
Kyungus) and they would go and sacrifice in his grove.

Thus to insult Kyungu was not only treasonable, it was blas-
phemous, and the whole plain was believed to be cursed with [687]
drought or disease in reply. An 'insult' might mean any neglect [688]
of the obligations of the chiefs and nobles and commoners of the
plain to their lord.

The people of Ngonde hoed large fields as tribute to the
Kyungu and if they failed to do so 'he grew angry and poured all [651]
the water out of the pot in which he kept his rain stones' (*vide* [789]
infra, p. 114) and 'the sky dried up'. Then the chiefs called their
men to hoe. . . . 'They hoed and hoed and hoed and their wives
planted, then the rain came in a torrent. . . . Kyungu created
much rain.'

Or if an elephant hunter neglected to send the Kyungu one of [651]
the tusks of any elephant he killed he would not kill another. 'The
country beneath was angry . . . the shades of the dead Kyungus [769]
. . . they were angry saying: "Why do you stint our child?" '

The rainfall in the Ngonde plain is less than half what it is in 643
the Nyakyusa valley and anxiety about rainfall was constantly 132
shown in the communal rituals; elephant hunting was also a 771
matter of concern in a way in which it was not among the Nya-
kyusa and this too is reflected in rituals; but there was also the 788
preoccupation with health and fertility, as in the prayers at
Lubaga. In the groves circling Mbande the nobles prayed: 'May
the sterile bear children, may the cattle and fowls increase, may [782]
the children sleep and not cry at night, may the witches not
injure anyone.' And as we shall see, it was health and fertility
that men had in mind when they cleared out the ashes each year
after the break of the rains. 769

Towards Christmas time, when the first maize and the first 796

769 796 pumpkin leaves were ready to eat, an elaborate first-fruit ceremony was formerly carried out. The new season's food was offered first by the nobles of Ngonde in the grove of the previous Kyungu, the one who had last died.

> [778] The great chiefs would do so next, each at his own sacred grove (the grave of his own predecessor in the title). And after them everyone, both chiefs and people, each at his father's grave. All offered first fruits to their own shades. And finally they would themselves eat, each with his chief wife. But they would not eat beforehand for fear of angering the shades.

● 643 796 [721] In time of tribal war also the Kyungu and nobles of Ngonde led the people in prayer. All chiefs and nobles were summoned from the plain and the great ones entered the Kyungu's house to receive their instructions:

> [782] When he had finished speaking he would tell them to go and pray. So they would leave his house and gather all together, all the chiefs, and the other men, and pray. The premier noble of Ngonde would begin asking each of the sacred groves of the Kyungus in turn to bless them in the fight. And then the great chiefs would pray after him.

This organization of religious ritual in the Ngonde plain was both a factor of and itself determined by the general political structure. Many details of the secular power of Mbande and of the lesser authorities were dependent upon their religious functions, but the reverse is equally true. Among the Nyakyusa, where the hierarchy of chiefs had scarcely any secular significance, [782] the organization of religious ritual was far less elaborate. Cattle were sent to Lubaga by the chiefs to be sacrificed for rain and health; but the 'clearing out of the ashes' was done by each chiefdom separately; there was no general first-fruits ritual at all; while, as war was never waged on a tribal basis, prayers and sacrifices for military success were always undertaken by each warring chiefdom alone.

643 789 [352] [293] The majesty (*ubusisya*) of the Kyungu was cultivated in a variety of ways. He smeared himself with ointment made from lion fat, and his bed was built up with elephant tusks and lion pelts. He was enthroned on the sacred iron stool called Kisumbi, he had a spear, Kamisa, and Mulima, a porous piece of iron 'like a mouth organ' used to make rain, all handed down from the first Kyungu. [778] His zebra tails, set with medicines in horn handles, were waved in

war and during prayer to the shades, and he also had the famous 643
drum on which the blood of a child was poured: 789
[778]

The Kyungu had a drum, called Mwenekelwa, which sometimes refused to sound when struck, then they asked: 'What does it wish, friends?' and they killed a sheep and poured the blood over Mwenekelwa; if it refused to sound when they struck it again, they killed a cow and poured the blood over it and if it still refused to sound when they struck it again, they said: 'What does it want now? It wants a man.' And they took the child of a commoner and cut his throat and poured the blood over the drum and struck it and it sounded loudly. If the drum did not sound when struck it was as if it had boomed an order; its silence was like a prayer. The drum was to show the majesty (*ubusisya*) of the Kyungu, that all the little chiefs at a distance might say: 'Something is happening, let us hear what it is.' Then they all gathered and were told to bring ivory. . . . They needed the blood of a man because their Lord (*Kyala gwabo*, i.e. the Kyungu) had fastened up the drum saying 'I myself am war, there is no other war' . . . [782]

The corpses of those sacrificed to the drum, like those condemned to death, were thrown over the scarp edge of Mbande, to be sucked into the marsh beneath.

Towards the early Kyungus their subjects expressed the feelings 643
of worship and terror appropriate to an irascible divinity. 782

At Mbande the nobles of Ngonde would sit round praising the Kyungu —the drums went *kinde! kinde!* And they would praise him in antiphony: 'Oh, Kyungu! . . . Great Father! Great Father!—burier of men!—Great Father! Great Father!—Great Father!—O Mpeta![1]—Great Father! Great Father!—O Kiposa[1]—Great Father! Great Father!—O Kyabala![1]—Great Father! Great Father! O Striker and Stabber! Great Father! Great Father! O Mwenende! Great Father! Great Father! O Mpolombasambo! Great Father! Great Father! Dweller in the hot sun!—Great Father! Great Father!—O Fish-eater! O Banana-eater!—Great Father! Great Father!' [539]

The general form of this praise-song was identical with that of the prayers in the sacred groves and so it is literally true to say that the nobles of Ngonde worshipped the living Kyungus.

But the majority of their subjects only worshipped from afar in 643
fear and trembling. At Mbande no ordinary commoner was ever conducted into the sacred enclosure, but only the territorial nobles and the elder chiefs, and they only occasionally; while when the Kyungu travelled through his country all men save the

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[1] These names are obscure.

643 very oldest fled from his approach. Even in speech fearful circumlocutions were used to refer to his journeying—'The country is on the move'—'the great hill is moving'—'the mystery is coming'. It was taboo both for the old men who stayed to see him, and for those who entered the sacred enclosure, ever to greet him in the usual way. Falling down and clapping the hands was the only greeting for the Kyungu.

From the wives of the Kyungu also men fled in terror, fearing lest they be compromised and thrown over the cliff of Mbande, and this both added to the atmosphere of terror which surrounded him and was an expression of it.

Of the effects of personal relationships upon public events we heard much less in Ngonde than in Selya for we lived there for a much shorter period, but there were indications that, as in Selya, public misfortune was traditionally attributed to quarrels between the nobles of Mbande and within the family of the [731] Kyungu. One fearful drought was thought to have been caused by the exile of Kyungu's son, Mwakasungula,[1] and men tell how the rain came down in torrents on his return. The nobles also asserted their power of calling on the shades of the Kyungu to [769] punish him when he did wrong, and rebuking him over beer telling him, 'It was we who caused you to be ill, don't do it again'. Since he was killed by his nobles if he really fell ill their power over him was inexorable.

(*d*) PALIKYALA

PaliKyala is a cave at the north-east corner of Lake Nyasa 778 where sacrifices are made to the hero, Kyala (2). It is on the 769 border between Nyakyusa, Kisi, and Kinga country; the chiefs are Nyakyusa, but of Kinga extraction,[2] while many of the commoners are Kisi. Nyakyusa is generally spoken as the first language, Kisi as the second, and Nyakyusa, Kinga, and Kisi all sacrifice to Kyala. As indicated in the myth already quoted (*vide supra*, p. 8) the location of the shrine has changed from one cave to another; according to one version, Kyala was driven out by Europeans; according to another, 'the Lake rose and roared and destroyed all the pots in the cave and the roar was heard in the mountains by the Kinga' and after that Kyala moved.

793 The ritual differs from that at Lubaga and Mbande in that

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[1] Godfrey Wilson, *The Constitution of Ngonde*, p. 26.

[2] They are not of the lineage of Lwembe.

yala has no living representative—in the myth he had no 793
escendants—but only a priest. However, the priest is sometimes
eferred to as 'Kyala' as were the early missionaries who preached
bout Kyala.[1] The present priest (1936) is a young man who, by
is own account, would be a Christian were it not for his public
esponsibility in providing food for the country. His grandfather,
Iwakinyasa, was a Kisi who came as an immigrant doctor from
ubajila in Kisi country to the south, and was the first of his
mily to hold office at PaliKyala. Before that the chiefs of the
ne of Mwampasa themselves celebrated the ritual. According 643 ●
Mwampasa's descendant, the present chief Mwandula, 'We
lanted food and the crops failed, but when "the owner of food"
Mwakinyasa) came with many medicines it grew, there was
uch food in the homesteads, hence we said: "Kyala has indeed
ved this man, let us give him the duty of sacrificing", so the
hiefs gave him cattle of his own and said: "Let the ritual come
ut of our bodies and go to Mwakinyasa."' It was Mwakinyasa
ho (according to his grandson) introduced a variety of crops—
eans, maize, cowpeas and groundnuts—to the people of Ikombe;
efore that they grew only bananas and *mapemba*,[2] so the myth [173]
f the hero who brought benefits is linked to the new line of
riests. But there is no tradition that the priest of Mwampasa's
ne was once a 'divine king' like the Lwembe and the Kyungu.

Those who sacrifice at PaliKyala are the local chiefs (de- 782
cendants of Mwampasa), the Kinga chiefs Mwakalukwa and
yelela (to whom Mwampasa was related), and various chiefs of 793
he Nyakyusa plain as far west as Mwandisi (107) near Mwaya.
he Kinga priests bring bamboo beer, hoes, sheep, and occasion-
lly goats or cattle; the local people offer white fowls, flour, cattle,
nd, traditionally, pots, which are produced in quantity near by, [323]
nd which were being sold at the market at Ikombe when the
uropeans first arrived in the country.[3] The Nyakyusa of the
lain send black (or black and white) cattle and sheep. According
o the Kinga priests they themselves offer black animals in Bu-
inga when they want rain—black clouds—and white animals
when they want sun and a clear sky. At Lubaga only dark animals
re offered, but at PaliKyala white fowls and black, or white (or

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[1] F. Fülleborn, *Das Deutsche Njassa- und Ruwuma-Gebiet*, p. 317.

[2] *Mapemba*—maize in Penja, but here it is contrasted with *ifilombe* (maize).

[3] Joseph Thomson, *To the Central African Lakes and Back* (1881), v. I, pp. 262-3. [113]
he missionary, Dr. A. Merensky, saw hatchets and choppers, as well as pots, on the
oor of the cave. F. Fülleborn, *op. cit.*, p. 320.

CHAPTER IV

THE RITUAL OF CHIEFTAINSHIP 49

(a) THE 'COMING OUT'

THE ritual which arouses the greatest excitement in BuNyakyusa 643 and in which every man, woman, and child participates, is the 'coming out' when the two heirs of a chief are acknowledged as rulers, and the government of the country is handed over to them and their village headmen.[1] This ritual occurs but once in a generation, when the chief's senior sons are between thirty and thirty-five years old; they, and their slightly older contemporaries and juniors 'come out' together. Should one, or even both heirs of a chief die after their 'coming out' and before their sons are grown up, the ritual is not celebrated again—it cannot be, for it concerns not individuals but a generation. Instead the young chiefs are replaced by their younger 'brothers', full or classificatory. And should a village headman die he also is replaced by his heir; the office does not lapse. Therefore there are two types of change in status: the great communal ritual when the old men retire and [561] their sons take office, and the family ritual when a dead man is [611] succeeded by his younger brother or his son. An *individual* may inherit from his father, succeeding to his office and moving into his homestead at any time, and when he has done so he is treated formally as a member of his father's generation; but the celebration throughout the chiefdom of sons succeeding fathers only takes place thrice in a century. Each chiefdom celebrates separately. There is no attempt to synchronize with neighbours.

It was usual, traditionally, for two sons to succeed their father, and divide his country between them. The division was foreshadowed at the father's 'coming out' when he married two senior [583] wives and settled them in different sections of his country; but it sometimes happened that a chief had a favourite for whom he built separately, and whose son went through the 'coming out' with his brothers and became independent, unless he was defeated in war and subjugated. Even a son who had no expectation of a

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[1] Neither of us saw a 'coming out' in full. Godfrey Wilson saw the conclusion of the coming out of the heirs of Mwangoka (24) in November 1935 and in April 1955 I was able to observe the territorial changes brought about by Mwanyilu's (117) 'coming out' in December 1953.

643 separate inheritance sometimes went through the ritual because he might later be required as a chief, and the son of a conquered chief who had retained limited authority over a small area might be permitted to 'come out' with his senior brothers also. The common pattern, then, was for two sons to 'come out' as principals, but for a variety of reasons one or more 'younger brothers' might join them.

In Ngonde, as opposed to BuNyakyusa, several brothers normally went through the ritual as principals and the reason given us was that power should be distributed. They would say, we were told, 'If we bring out only two they will be boastful and ill-use their people, let them be many therefore, then, if a man has a quarrel with his chief, he can flee to another. . . .' In BuNyakyusa [622] any tendency to tyranny in a chief was effectively curbed by his village headmen; but it is possible that headmen never had as much power in Ngonde as they did in BuNyakyusa.

An analysis of the genealogies of Nyakyusa chiefs shows that very often one half-brother lost power to the other, but occasionally several brothers (e.g. seven sons of Mwaipopo 26) got independent chiefdoms, and a junior brother (e.g. Mwakyusa 38) [669] might attract a larger following of men than his seniors. Mwakyusa led his men from the hills to the more fertile plain and drove out the Kyungu of Ngonde from the lake-shore north of the Songwe river.

The 'coming out' was traditionally the occasion when authority was handed over by the elder generation to the younger. The old [761] chief retired and he was *expected to die shortly*. In Nyakyusa theory he died because his men no longer loved him: 'A chief did not [888] live long after the "coming out" of his sons; he died because there was war and people would complain: "He is too old, when we fight we are beaten, he had better die, perhaps the heir will help us." He died of the "breath of men".' But, as will be shown, his headmen had the duty of smothering a chief who seemed likely to die, and they were much more ready to do this after the 'coming out' of his sons than before. It was right that the sons should come out before their father's death, but not right that the period of coregency should be extended, for the division of authority between old and young was uneasy. When the old chief did die his [793] headmen became the priests (*abanyago*) responsible for the sacri- [622] fices in his grove, and the young men were solely responsible for the defence of the country and the administration of justice.

Since the 'coming out' of his sons spelt not only retirement, but 643
speedy death to a chief, he was not unnaturally reluctant to
asten it and, we were told, chiefs would try to defer it, but were
ressed by their village headmen to celebrate, and had eventually
accept their advice. Indeed we heard of one chief whose illness [753]
as attributed to the 'breath' of his men, angry because he
efused to hold the 'coming out' which was due.

Nowadays the situation is radically altered by the fact that chiefs ontinue to live long after the 'coming out' of their sons, and the dministration treats the old chief as the sole authority, or the ld men find good reasons for not holding the celebration at all.

Before the ritual there is much speculation and excitement
hroughout the chiefdom, and private discussions between the old
hief and his village headmen about suitable candidates for office.
hey look for men of wisdom (*amahala*),[1] skilled in settling dis- [183]
utes, modest (for boastfulness is judged intolerable in a Nyakyusa [577]
ge-village as it is in an English public school), and given to
ospitality. A leader must feed his men and to do so he requires to
e relatively wealthy, therefore the poor have little chance of
ffice.

When the old men are agreed among themselves they summon 643
ll the young men to the capital. They come dancing and swagger- 622
ng with all their cattle, and there the old headmen seize, one by 796
ne, those they have chosen as village headmen for the next
eneration, beginning with the senior headman for each heir, then
he second senior for each, and so on. Usually eight are chosen,
our for each young chief. We get a glimpse of what it means to
ne individual in the following statement by the second headman
f the chief, Koroso (173):

> made fire at the 1910 'coming out'. I can't tell much because we [177]
> ho who were caught were in fear and trembling. I knew beforehand,
> ecause my brother was told to come from Ipyana [mission], but he
> as a Christian and the missionaries refused to allow him to become a
> illage headman—they feared the medicines. He ran away and came
> ere—he wanted to be a headman and the old men wanted him, but
> hen he changed his mind and went off to be a soldier, and so they
> ook me.

Probably word of who have been chosen as village headmen

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[1] For a discussion of the content of *amahala*, cf. Monica Wilson, *Good Company*, pp. 89-90.

643 often leaks out, but in theory the young men must not know, and
622 those seized always put up a show of resistance before being
796 bundled into the hut of the senior heir's mother. Once there, no
man dare flee lest, like a Lwembe fleeing from the stool, he should
[784] die. The two heirs are seized also and carried into the hut with
their headmen. A litter is spread for them, and they remain there
in complete seclusion, required to 'talk softly' and avoid quarrelling, guarded by the 'doctor of the coming out' and forbidden to wash except that each of the chiefs and his senior village headman washes with medicines in the doorway of the hut. Each chief also lies down with a commoner and is covered with a black cloth
[789] which, according to Mwandisi (the old blind chief 107) is a symbol of clouds and therefore of plenty. 'It means, may it be heavy—cloudy—above, may food be plentiful; may both heirs bring fruitfulness.' The commoner who lies with the chief is 'one body with him', 'his wife', and continues through life to share with him certain medicines. Some said that the senior village headman performs this function for his chief: others that it is another man altogether. The whole matter is very secret and our information is limited. The period of seclusion varies. Mwanyilu (177), who 'came out' in 1953, remained in the hut a month, and he complained most bitterly of the inconvenience of not washing for so long. During this time the young men are admonished by
[867] their fathers' senior village headmen, and told of their faults and their future duties. According to Mwambuputa (Mwankuga's [150] senior headman who was responsible for bringing out Mwanyilu), he said: 'Listen to the people: they are the real chiefs! Be hospitable! Greet people politely! Don't beat your men!' And the other senior headman, Kakuju, said: 'Do not beat your men, respect them! Feed your people on milk, meat, chickens, beer! Fear your people!'

Then the great moment, from which the ritual takes its name, arrives. Very early in the morning a crowd gathers and a junior kinsman of the chief knocks on the door and shouts: 'Come out! War has come!' Each heir, followed by his senior headman,
[778] rushes out and grasps the 'spear of chieftainship' held ready at the doorway for him, while the headman grasps a medicated zebra tail. The spear has a little horn of medicines bound to it 'to show that the chief has come out', and brandishing it is 'comparable to carrying the chief aloft. We show his greatness to the people and acclaim him.' 'The spear of chieftainship is strength, man-

hood.' Some say that it is not the chief himself who grasps the spear but his senior village headman who pauses in the doorway calling the war cry and rejoicing. However that may be, the spear represents the authority of a ruling chief. At the 'coming out' of Mwanyilu (177) and his junior brother Mwabungulu (178), both were secluded and rushed out of the hut, but for Mwabungulu there was no spear since the chiefdom of their father was not divided into independent units. 796 643 622 [778]

The heirs separate, each going to where his village is to stand, whether it be pasture land or the site of a former village. The young men build temporary shelters for themselves and proceed to the most important rite of all, the making of fire by friction, using a lion bone as the trough of the drill and a reed as the shaft. Each of the two young chiefs starts the process, then his senior village headmen take over, one twirling the shaft and the other holding the trough. It is difficult to make fire with the bone and reed and great importance is attached to success; the senior headman may even be replaced if he fails, for it is taken as a sign that his headmanship will be a failure. If he succeeds, he is known in future as *ulifumu gwa lupegeso*—the headman of the fire-making. All the old fires throughout the chiefdom are put out and each appointed headman, in order of precedence, takes fire from his immediate senior and calls to his men: 'You of such and such a village come to me' and gives fire to them. The men, though crowded together in one or two shelters, split into small groups, each with its own fire, to cook. This is interpreted as a symbol of the ending of the old chieftainship and the establishment of the new. 'That fire means a new chief has come, he brings new fire, we throw away the old fire in the houses. . . .' 'The old chieftainship is coming to an end, the new has come. The fires are put out in all the homesteads, those of the young men and those of the old men, they make new fire which is taken to every home. . . .' 'But why fire?' we asked. 'Because of old . . . we chiefs came with fire, the commoners had not yet got it, they ate raw food only. When we came we slept in men's houses and we lighted fires and cooked food. Men were astonished and said: "Ha! What's this?" They were burned so they said: "These are chiefs because they brought this fire." It is this they remember still.' 'Fire *is* lordship (*ubutwa*)', therefore a junior chief who goes through the ritual with his brothers does not make fire with his headmen; only those who are to rule do so. In other contexts the lighting of fire by friction is a 643 622 796 372

9: Wilson E-5 (1934-1955) 1959
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[Facing p. 54]

6. YOUNG CHIEF WITH HIS TREES

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796 symbol of potency,[1] and we suggest that this also is an element in the ritual of the 'coming out', for the fertility of the chiefdom is thought to be bound up with the virility of the chief.

[372] There are a number of stories about the way in which Mwakyusa (58) surpassed his brothers and one of them tells how each brother made fire and set alight the pasture land (for traditionally parts of the pasture land were fired each season to provide fresh grass for grazing in the early spring), and the fires started by the elder brothers soon died out, but that started by Mwakyusa 'burned for a whole month'. This is interpreted as an omen of his greatness as a chief: fire, potency, lordship are inextricably linked.

[561] [356] At the 'coming out' all things are made new. No matter how crowded the country the young men must move to new sites and the shelters in which they live must be new, though, as will be shown, they do not necessarily move to *unoccupied* country. On their new site the young men live as bachelors, milking their cows and cooking for themselves on their new fires the meat of the cattle they seize, the bananas and grain brought by their wives and mothers. Meat is abundant, for the young chief now rules and has the right to take what cattle he chooses, even from the villages of the old men in his country. 'It was as if there were war, [726] the young men seized cattle, food, and women', and though they did not fight their fathers directly, as the Meru did, they clearly asserted their power. And, as so common farther south, the accession of a chief was the occasion for raiding the neighbours: [778] the young men, we were told, went forthwith to test the efficacy of the magic spears and the medicines with which their chief and headmen had been treated. Or the chiefs might lead a battue to clear the country of wild pig, as Mwakatumbula (Mwambete 160) did directly after his 'coming out'. Well fed and exuberant, the [574] young men dance and display their cattle, and entertain visitors lavishly, for every chief seeks to attract men to his country by his hospitality.

[824] [423] Then they set up the sign and memorial of the chieftainship: they plant cuttings of two species[2] of *ficus*, *isdale* which is much used as a shade tree, and *unpandapanda* from which bark-cloth is made. Close to these the first house of the chief and that of his senior village headmen are built, and the trees also mark the

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[1] Monica Wilson, *Rituals of Kinship*, pp. 124, 143.

[2] When writing *Good Company* I mistakenly thought that two cuttings of the same species were planted. Cf. *Good Company*, p. 23.

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7. HEIR TO A CHIEFDOM
([illegible])

[Facing p. 55]

9:Wilson E-5 (1934-1955) 1959
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Nyakyusa

future boundary between the two halves of the chiefdom, where it will split the next generation. They serve as beacons[1] and are cited as evidence both of the 'coming out' and of the division of land in any later dispute. At the same time the trees are symbols of chieftainship and with their growth the success of the reign is mystically linked. According to one account, 'four headmen fetch the cuttings and the young *chief* stands between them (*vide plate 6*) and tells the trees to grow well, and the others say: "We are planting you likewise, we are at the ritual of establishing a new chieftainship, you are a symbol of our chiefs, spread branches that our young headmen and other people may rest in your shade."' A doctor assists at the planting, burying at the roots a live white sheep and medicines, which, it is said, later turn into the lions or leopards which protect the trees from the impious (*vide infra*, p. 58); and he sweeps beneath the trees, a symbol of what the senior headman must do in future, for it is his duty to 'watch over the trees'. In Nyakyusa thought, village headmen are an integral part of chieftainship—it cannot exist without them—and the trees symbolize *both* the *chief* and his lady and the two senior headmen. The same informant (well known as a doctor for the 'coming out') told us: 'It means we are planting the *chief* and his lady; *umpandapanda* is the hard to hard *indola*, which is the more important. *Umpandapanda* is the woman, it may dry up, but *ulupando* (*indola*) never does; it is the *chief*, it is familiars (*abafugo*), but *umpandapanda* is not', and a moment or two later, 'the *ulupando* is the senior village headman, *umpandapanda* is the junior headman'. The strength of the *chief* is associated with the growth of the trees. If these trees go dry the reign will not be successful, the *chief* will be defeated in war. If they flourish and grow the reign will be successful, the *chief* is a ruler. The *indola* planted for Mwaijonga (81) is shown proudly by his great-grandson, and Mwambeta (162) who had a long reign and an enormous family boasted of the size of his *umpandapanda*—'a great spreading tree'. Ideally the young *chief* should, in due course, sit in the shade of his *indola* with his headmen, to settle disputes.

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After the trees are planted the young men build their senior headman's house and the doctor sets up his hearth bricks, burying medicine beneath them also. The marriage of the *chief* follows.[2]

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[1] cf. D. Kerr-Cross, 'Crater-Lakes north of Lake Nyasa', *The Geographical Journal*, v, IV (1895), p. 117.

[2] According to most accounts, but *vide infra*, p. 58.

[113]

622 He, like many of his men, may have been married long before the
643 'coming out', but his ritual wedding to the mothers of his heirs
796 follows it, and from the time of his seclusion, until his marriage,
585 he, and all his men, should live as bachelors. The brides are
chosen by his village headmen and in theory they are carried off
by force, whether betrothed or not, but nowadays, since the
[777] Administration discountenances forced marriages, the headmen
arrange matters with the girls' families beforehand, very privately,
but still they come with a show of force to carry off the brides.
Girls are chosen who are approaching puberty and they are taken
to the house of a commoner contemporary of their future husband.
There they live until both have grown up and the puberty ritual
can be celebrated. It follows the usual course except that the
[584] neighbours of the man in whose house the brides are secluded
play the part of the girls' families, cooking for the groom's party
at the prescribed feasts. The chief washes with both girls, thereby
acknowledging them as his senior wives; the marriage bed is
prepared with medicines and there is great rejoicing. The following
morning someone knocks at the door of the nuptial chamber
crying: 'War has come', and the chief and his brides rush out to
the pasture land, just as the parents of twins do at the end of their
ritual.[1] Then[2] a long narrow stone (*ulufiga*) is set with medicines
[797] in the earth, beside the chief's trees as a symbol of his marriage
(*ikimanyilo kya bwegi*) to the mothers of his heirs. 'The stone *is* the
chief' (*ilifiga ili je malafyale*). Hearth-bricks (*amafiga*) are then set
up for each bride with medicines buried beneath them, and they
are given fire from that ritually kindled by their husband and
his headman. Finally they are given medicines to drink in order
to develop in them 'the dignity of chief's wives' (*ubusigya bwa
bwale*).

No marriage is complete, in Nyakyusa eyes, until cattle have
643 been handed over, and though the chief's brides have been carried
583 off by force, cattle—more than double the normal number—are
given to their fathers. The village headmen of the retiring generation
should provide these cattle and they or their heirs are recompensed
when the eldest daughters born of the two wives are

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[1] cf. Monica Wilson, *Rituals of Kinship*, pp. 158, 165.

[2] Mwanyila's marriage apparently preceded the planting of his trees and the phallic stone was erected at the same time as the trees were planted, but the marriages of the sons of Mwangupila *followed* the planting of their trees. The order of events seems to vary, and differences are explained as due to the order of the doctor in charge of the ritual. 'Different doctors have different customs.'

narried. Thus, yet another bond is forged between chief and 643
eadman, for he who provides marriage cattle is 'father' to him 583
vho marries, and the chief's wives acknowledge this by avoiding
he village headmen of the senior generation as they do their
ather-in-law. Once the chief's ritual marriage is complete the [834]
ex taboo is lifted and such of his men as are already married are
oined by their wives. In theory, though not nowadays in practice,
he taboo is observed until the marriage of the chief.

All through the ritual of the 'coming out' the idea of a new 643
eginning is expressed—a new site for the villages, new houses, 561
ew fire, new power for the young men. The events of this ritual, 796
he seclusion, the lying on a litter, the prohibition on washing,
vashing with medicines in the doorway of the hut, the admonition, 181
re directly parallel to the events of the rituals of death and
uberty which, we have argued in a previous book,[1] are drama-
izations of death and rebirth. There seems little doubt that the
coming out' is yet another celebration of this theme. The young
nen enter an enclosed house—that of the senior's mother—
nd 'come out' (*ukusoka*) renewed as a child 'comes out' (*ukusoka*)
f the mother's womb. No Nyakyusa informant volunteered such
n interpretation, but, when it was suggested, it was eagerly
ccepted as expressing the real meaning of 'coming out'.

(*b*) THE CHIEF'S MEDICINES

Reference has already been made to medicines used by chiefs 643
nd by village headmen at the 'coming out' and we must now 778
xamine them more closely. The great medicines of chieftainship
re *ifingila* and their function is to create *amanga*, i.e. spiritual
ower, and *ubusisya*, i.e. dignity, majesty, in order to make the
hief fearful 'so that men obey him'. The medicines are com-
arable to robes of office for they are designed to give their user
ssurance and fill the commonality with awe. The Nyakyusa
lso think that chiefs and headmen should be 'heavy' with 'pythons [787]
n their bellies' which give them the power to see and fight
vitches. Without such a 'python' a chief or village headman [754]
annot fulfil his duty of 'watching over the country by day and
y night' and if a man is not born with one he may develop it
hrough the proper use of medicines. This notion has been ex-
mined elsewhere.[2] The *ifingila* medicines are also thought to give
ourage and ferocity (*ubugasi*) in war, with luck in seizing enemy

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[1] *op. cit.*, p. 205.

[2] Monica Wilson, *Good Company*, pp. 97-100.

9: Wilson E-5 (1934-1955) 1959
FN17 Ngonde FN17
Nyakyusa

643 cattle and protecting one's own, and to attract men to the
778 country.

The two senior sons of a chief are given powdered *ikingila* to drink from early childhood; at the 'coming out' they lie on it and drink it again with their village headmen, some is buried beneath their ritual trees, and the chief's homestead is treated with it periodically. (75, 64, 778) One form of *ikingila* is made of the heart of a lion and the heart of a leopard, together with the scrapings from a charred root, and one of its qualities is to create lions or leopards which guard the trees under which it is buried. 'They make anyone who has cut a branch of one of the trees for firewood tremble at night, he trembles and returns the wood; they do not kill, but they stay roaring there until he repents.' Now part of the dignity (*ubusigwe*) of a chief is that lions and leopards attend him; they roam his country; they are his familiars (*imbego*). 'The sons of Lwembe'
[776] lack the fearful power of their great ancestor who 'rode a lion like a donkey', but they are believed to command familiars which clear the country of the wild pig that destroy men's gardens, and protect the sacred groves by terrifying any sacrilegious person who dares chop wood where he should fear. But they do not kill men or cattle. That is what distinguishes them from 'God's lions which kill cattle even by day' and the man-eaters made by sorcerers to
[754] destroy those they hate. There is no hint of lycanthropy—our informants denied emphatically that chiefs, dead or alive, turned into *imbego*, but they 'follow the chief' when he travels.

A second *ikingila*, sprinkled on the chief's mat when he is secluded, and drunk with his two senior village headmen, is made of red, black, and shining white or yellow pebbles, which are ground up and mixed with *indinga*, a medicine brought by the Kinga, but the symbolism of these ingredients remains obscure.

The greatest of the *ifingila*, used only for the chief himself, is *isyifwila*, a terrible substance with power perilously like that of witchcraft. When either of the senior wives of a chief gives birth
[894] to a son a little is hidden in the litter on which she lies; it is put into the litter on which the heirs lie at the 'coming out'; and into the sacred tails and trumpets which are carried into battle. Like other medicines of chieftainship, *isyifwila* is used to give the chief majesty (*ubusigwe*), 'that people who meet him may fear him'; that he and his warriors may appear fierce; that they may be 'heavy and strong' in war; that when the trumpet is blown it

may 'make the enemy fearful and sue for peace'; and that even men who have left his country may return to him. And it is so powerful that the dose must be carefully adapted to the individual. 643 778 789 If a chief is already 'heavy' with an inherited python he is given the merest fragment, but a gentle fellow thought to be 'light', 'empty', is given more, that his words may carry weight. Too much will make a chief harsh (*ukali*)—'he will always be beating men'—and he must be given an antidote to calm him down. Too much in the tails causes them to 'fly through the air at night, [754] gleaming, and throttle the cows'. This is the danger of *ipyifwila*, that it may act like the pythons in the bellies of witches and kill men and cattle. Controlled by a chief it is held to be reasonably safe, though Kalolo, Mwaipopo's (116) second wife, who was grumbling because no tail had been lodged in her house was told that she did not know how lucky she was for '*ipyifwila* is very fearful—it enters the belly, it makes itself into familiars'.

The use of *ipyifwila* is forbidden to commoners. In Ngonde, with its hierarchy of chiefs, it was the danger of attempting to equal one of superior rank that was emphasized. 'If a commoner sprinkles *ipyifwila* on himself saying, "Let me surpass my fellows", [689] and he meets a chief (who is entitled to use it) then he dies immediately because he said to himself, "I also am a chief"'; and 'If an Ngama chief dances and sprinkles his spear with *ipyifwila* . . . and then meets Kyungu, he dies.' In the more democratic atmosphere of BaNyakyusa chiefs were 'very angry' if commoners used it, but it was the danger of its acting like witchcraft and throttling men and cattle and, eventually, its owner, that men spoke of most. [754] We heard of half a dozen men—among them the most successful trader of Selya—who were reputed to use it 'to surpass their fellows' and 'get rich' and one case actually came to Court. Mwaipopo, the chief (116), raised the matter himself:

> Why does this thing go about at night? I have seen it myself, it shines, I know it. It is that with which the doctors treat us chiefs to make us impressive [i.e. *ipyifwila*]. Do you not know, you commoners, that we chiefs have prohibited its use in our countries? Ask your fellow Mandala! He is bad, he planted this thing, it kills you people.

So two village headmen went and called Mandala who lived near Ngulya, and brought him to Court. There he was asked: 'Why did you keep this which kills people?' Mandala denied vehemently saying, 'I have not planted this.' But Mwaipopo

643 replied: 'Why does he deny it? He told me once: "I have a thing
778 which kills people!"' Then, turning to the man: 'Go and fetch i
789 out into the light.' Mandala went and we heard that he brough
[751] out another medicine, not the one asked for, he brought it to the headmen and Mwaipopo. Mwaipopo (who, being a chief, knew *ipyifwila*) rejected the one Mandala brought saying: 'This is not it.' Then Mandala brought out another and again the chief rejected it saying: 'This is not the one we want.' Then he brought out a little bag made of bark-cloth. They sought a doctor to clear it out. All this happened in secret; we heard of it but did not see it. But in Court Mwaipopo turned Mandala out of his country 'because he had admitted that he was wicked', and Mwaipopo reminded the other chiefs in Court of a previous case of a man in Mwangomo's country who had used this medicine.

Ipyifwila is made out of a python 'as thick as a man's thigh' which has been killed by crawling over razors. In Ngonde we were told:

> A certain snake they call *ngosa* is killed in the hills to the west. They build a hut, closed, with a man inside ringing a cow bell and razors all over the roof. The snake comes and crawls over the roof, trying to get in and so dies. Then the doctors come to 'close it up'. When they have done so they cut it up for medicine—*ipyifwila*; some is brought to Kyungu direct . . . some is taken to the doctors, and it is the doctors who give it to the chief.

A similar story was told in BuNyakyusa but they got their
[825] *ipyifwila* from the Sangu and Hehe, to the north and east, not from the west, and in their account the trap was baited with a goat, not a man, and it was the blood of the python (*isota*) shed on the surrounding grass and on the trap itself which was used for
[787] medicine. To test the medicine the doctors gave a little to a chicken; if the chicken died the medicine was satisfactory, and the remains of the chicken were burnt and the ashes used as tested *ipyifwila*.

'That snake is awful (*nkiga fyo*), no one approaches to kill it.
[878] No! If it were speared everyone would die.' And because the python which is so terrible is thought to be linked with the rain-
[821] bow it, too, is disliked. 'We fear the rainbow very much, we say it appears when a python looks up to the sky; if we are near a river we run from it for pythons live near rivers. . . . No, we are not mistaken, it is so.' The essential quality of the python is *ubusige* (fearfulness, majesty, dignity) and this is what is required

in rulers and is thought to be transferred to them in the medicine brewed out of python blood. 413 778 779

It will be noticed that the central mystery of Lubaga and the sources of the most powerful medicine are the same, and the medicine is akin to witchcraft. The shades, medicines, and witchcraft are distinguished and are thought to operate independently, but they are all manifestations of a mystical power which is logically one, though none of our informants saw it as that.

We referred earlier to the function of the chiefs' medicines in giving courage in war and luck in raiding. Certain emblems of chieftainship are carried in war: a sacred spear, a hornless trumpet (*ililongo*) or a great war-horn (*ingongolwa*), and several giraffe or zebra tails (*imisengele*), and all of these have little horns filled with *ingifuila* attached to them. Of the trumpet it was said: 'You hear it and your heart swells and a great trembling comes over you and you fight.' 'The chiefs forbid them to be blown now because their blowing always brings war.' Each of the senior village headmen is given a tail at the 'coming out' and he went into battle with it bound on to his upper arm. A notable warrior was sometimes given one also. To lose a tail in battle was comparable to losing the regimental colours and there are epics of their loss and recovery. If the leader who carried it saw that he was surrounded he would try to pass it back, or he might hide it on the ground: [271] [721] [776]

then that night they would go back to the spot and they would find it because it shone with a light and made a bubbling noise, *bwubwi, bwubwi, bwubwi*. . . . [779]

In the old days the medicine [in the tails] was frequently renewed; for there was war, and it gave the headmen the power of dreaming of the course of war. . . . But now, since you have brought peace to the land, no one renews it, and it has gone rotten.

However, the tails in Mwaipopo's chiefdom were then treated in December 1937, and we saw it done. The four tails, with six tiny medicine horns and a calabash of medicated ointment, were formally handed over to the care of Kalinga, Mwaipopo's (118) chief wife, having previously been in the care of his mother. Mwaipopo himself was there with two kinsmen and the three commoner priests Kisanyota, Njobakona, and Ngulyo, but not Kasitile (88) since he was 'father-in-law' to Kalinga and could not meet her, though he was informed of the ritual. Kalobo, the second senior wife, looked on. Kalinga poured out the ointment

643 778 789 and Mwaipopo and Kisogota smeared it over the tails which were then put out with the horns to dry in the sun. Mwaipopo suggested getting Mwaisyelage, the doctor, to treat them further, and the others agreed saying: 'Let Mwaipopo find someone, that the earth may be good, that it be heavy.' Njobakosa had spoken earlier of the cattle giving much milk after the treatment of the tails. And they went on to discuss the fact that the young chief Mwankuga II (131) had begotten no child by the wife inherited from his elder brother (130) whose place he had taken. Thus the function of the chief in creating plenty and [842] fertility was in the priests' minds, and there may be some link between the virility of the chief and success in war—one informant spoke of the chief's senior wives jumping over the tails immediately after the consummation of their marriage—but of this we are not certain. What is common knowledge is that the tails are 'for seizing cattle', and they are associated with 'manure and blood'. We were told at the conclusion of the ritual: 'Formerly we should have gone tomorrow, after this treating of the tails, to fight.'

Besides medicines for majesty, courage, and popularity as rulers, chiefs use medicines to protect themselves against the fearfulness of the groves in which they sacrifice, medicines to 'close the country to hunger', to make their capitals grand, and to cause thieves who have stolen, to walk round and round until caught.

Medicines are regarded as essential to authority, victory, and successful rule, and the kind used and the dose given are adjusted to the status and character of the individual. 'Village headmen [622] do not drink the most important *ikipiki*; they drink a lesser one, *imbinga*; the senior headman is given most, the junior less.' And the chief's wives do not drink *ikipiki* at all, but only a powder suitable for them. But the use of these medicines has its dangers. The chief, like other people who have been drinking protective medicines, does not eat the new crops grown on fields fertilized [754] by ash without fortifying himself. The danger is said to come from the burnt rubbish heaps, because medicines for defence against witches and sorcerers are burnt in them and, as we have seen, certain of the medicines which the chief uses create a power akin to witchcraft. He tastes the new millet ritually in June, the cow [785] peas in September, and pumpkin leaves in November; and he also tastes the 'new earth' at the break of the rains in October or early November. 'We chiefs fear that the medicines we have drunk will

turn round in the belly; people say the earth will go bad in us.' 643
'A child who has drunk medicines will be ill, the smell of the new 778
food or the wet earth goes to the belly.' 789

[788] The chief eats the first fruits and medicines with the commoner who lies down with him at the commencement of his 'coming out' and 'is his wife to taste with him the first fruits and powdered medicines' and is 'fearful' like the medicines. He is identified with [644] the chief's body and may be compared with the *inithumsu* of the Pondo chief[1] or the *insila* of the Swazi.[2] His function is to protect the chief against the medicines themselves.

(c) DEATH AND BURIAL OF A CHIEF

Both because of a chief's descent, and because of his use of 643
medicines, mystical power resides in his body. 763
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> In the old days a ruling chief was not allowed to die, but was buried while still living, because they feared that if he became unconscious before death he would take away all the food with him, and great hunger would come on us. Men feared *ifingila* medicine in his belly. They said: 'If he dies naturally many of his people will die. . . . He should go alive.' And formerly they buried him with the son of a commoner, also alive, for they said, 'Let him enjoy the company of his man on the road.' When a chief was sick before the coming out of his sons they tried to keep him alive if possible, but if he was clearly going to die then they buried him like this; after the coming out they hastened his death—but only if he were ill. That was why the chiefs fear the 'coming out' of their sons so greatly. Had Mwaipopo lived in the old days and his heir been alive he would have been buried during his last illness.
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> When a ruling chief was sick the village headmen sent the chief's wives away and looked after him themselves. Then, if they thought he would, or should, die, they tore off all his nails, those of his toes and those of his fingers, and pulled out his hair, and put them in a pot. After that they buried him by night still alive, with a live person, the child of a commoner whom they had seized very secretly. The pot stood in the house of the senior wife of the chief who had died, and [778] they said, 'It is the chief, we are with him still.' This was the sacred pot for the sacred beer.[3] They kept silence about the death for a month or perhaps two months, saying: 'Let the chief go away first.'
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> And when a younger brother, a junior chief, died, though he died

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[1] M. Hunter, *Reaction to Conquest*, p. 390.

[2] H. Kuper, *An African Aristocracy*, p. 78.

[3] Kasitile flatly denied this, *vide infra*, p. 64.

643 naturally and was buried dead, and no human was buried with him,
763 yet they buried a live cow with him in imitation of the custom of the
766 senior, because the junior was also a chief, and the cow was like a
person. And now in European times the ruling chiefs are buried with
a cow, not with a man, in imitation of the custom of the juniors; but
still they are buried at night.

Kasitile denied that chiefs were buried before death, but he admitted that they were smothered.

[793] When the chief was very ill we priests came, Njobakosa and Ngulyo,
and I. We took his nails and his hair, we tore them off while he was
still alive, he started up and we hid ourselves that he should not see us.
Then we attended to him.

Here he made a gesture of stopping up the nostrils. That is, they hastened his death as soon as the nails and hair had been stripped off.

And we dug the grave; we buried him by night, when he had died,
when he had gone, with a live cow; we did this at night for it was taboo
[784] for people to see the burial of a senior chief. We killed a cow in the
sacred grove and we ate it, we the priests, before people heard that he
had died. The chief Mwakagile (59) when his death was approaching
said: 'My body is sick.' After waiting two days, the village headmen
said, 'This illness has defeated us', and they tore off his nails—yes,
[778] before he died. If they had waited until after his death, would not the
ifingila, the power of chieftainship, have passed away? But they did not
smother him, he just died. . . . His nails and hair were put into a little
reed, which they hid beneath an *umwali* (*Chlorophora excelsa*) tree at the
village headman's, the *umwali* which grew at the homestead of Njobakosa
[the grandfather of the present Njobakosa]. They buried it at a
commoner's place, as if to say: 'We commoners are the earth, we have
[778] taken the power of growth (*ifuge*) from the chief, those nails and the
hair are the power of growth of the country (*ifyala fila nswili fye ifuge
lya kisu*).

Kasitile took Godfrey Wilson's hand and explained: 'Because, Mwaipaja (G.W.), when you cut these nails of yours do they not grow again?' 'Yes, they grow again.' 'Well, then, where does their growth come from? Does it not come from the body?' 'Yes.' 'Well, so it is, the village headmen take the power of growth (*ilifuge*) from the chief, his nails and his hair.'

On another occasion Kasitile explained that formerly the relics had been kept in a pot in the house, but that when Mwaipopo (116) succeeded

> Njobakosa [the grandfather] ran off with them to Mwaihojo in the hills, where he died so that they disappeared and were never returned to his fellow-priests. Therefore they bury the relics by the *amasali* tree, at his old homestead, lest someone run off with them again. . . . The hair and nails of the chief are buried there, the earth of the chief will always be heavy. All this is very secret. . . . 643 763 766 [778]

Mwandisi (107, the old blind chief) told us that

> When a chief dies they take his nails and hair and put them in the house of his wife who buries them with medicine for fertility of the soil (*ifugo*), then at the time of planting the village headmen come and take that medicine to plant the food with. This was done on the death of the chief Mwakalukwa (141) and the chief Mwakalinga (142) and others for, it is said, the chief goes off with our fertility (*imbote yetu*).

Thus, though our informants differed slightly about the details, they were agreed that the power of growth lies in the nails and hair of a chief, and these must be taken from him while he is yet alive, and later used to fertilize the earth.

The burial of a chief's son with a live black calf we saw for ourselves, and the wailing was delayed until after the burial. A distinctive funeral of this sort is accorded to all the sons of a ruling chief and his senior daughter, but not (we were told) to more distant kinsmen. The other mark of a royal funeral is the slaughter of many head of cattle to accompany the deceased and to feed the mourners. At the death of the chief Mwakyembe (99) over 300 head were killed, and Mwaipopo (116) killed thirty head at the funeral of his mother. Since a chief has many wives and daughters he has many affines all of whom must bring cows to kill, and he also has a large herd himself on which to draw. To fail to feed his people at a funeral is to fail as a chief. The whole country mourns for two or three weeks, no one going to work in the fields, or occupying themselves with ordinary business. All smear themselves with mud, as if they were kinsmen, and even the men bind their bellies tightly with mourning belts 'that they may not tremble'. [765]

(*d*) THE CHIEF AND THE 'BREATH OF MEN'

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Fruitfulness, the power of growth (*imbote*), lies in the chief's body and the village headmen have no share in it; they only tend it, taking care that it does not disappear with the dead. But the headmen share with the chief and the priests the duty of 'watching

643 over the country by day and by night', and power (*amanga*) to see the enemies of darkness (that is, the witches) is thought to 778 come to each priest or village headman from a python in his 622 belly. No one can fulfil his duties as a ruler and defender unless he is 'heavy', but to have a python inside one is *also* the mark of a witch. Pressed on the point the Nyakyusa hold that a chief or [759] village headman only has one python whereas witches have several, but this distinction is not maintained consistently, and many of our informants were agreed that the power of witchcraft and the power to see and fight witches were one and the same. The essential distinction lies in the use to which the power is put; wrongly used it is 'witchcraft' (*ubulosi*); rightly used to defend the village or to punish evil-doers it is 'the breath of men' (*imbepo sya bandu*) and how any particular case is labelled depends upon the viewpoint of the speaker. The victim of a misfortune and his kin will indignantly attribute it to 'witchcraft' when other people regarded it as due to his wrongdoing and a punishment brought about by 'the breath of men'.

Each village headman, together with those of the village who are 'heavy', is thought competent both to defend those of his village whom he judges innocent against witches from outside or within, and to punish wrong-doers, by bringing upon them the chill of fever. Hence those who have angered their neighbours and believe themselves to be attacked by 'witches', take refuge in another village.

The power of witchcraft is believed to be inherited, rarely acquired; but the power of defence is both inherited and increased by drinking medicines, and there seems little doubt that the medicines drunk by chief and village headmen at the 'coming out' to create in themselves *ubusisya*—majesty, awesomeness—also develop *amanga*, the power to see and fight witches. Indeed, one of our Christian informants insisted that *ubusisya bo bulosi*—'awesomeness *is* witchcraft'.

These ideas have been discussed in some detail elsewhere.[1] Here I am only concerned to show the importance of the belief in 'the breath of men' in the relationship between chief and village headmen. Not only do village headmen have the ultimate power of life and death over their chief, but they are thought to bring illness upon him if he acts unconstitutionally or disregards their advice, or fails in his duty of providing beef for his men. He may

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[1] Monica Wilson, *Good Company*, pp. 91-135.

play one village against another and go to sleep in that section 643
of the country which supports him, but he dare not anger all his 778
headmen. In the same way a village headman dare not anger the 622
main body of his men. In short, public opinion is an effective
sanction because those in authority believe that the disapproval of
their fellows may bring a fever or paralysis upon them. One of our
Christian informants was insistent that, were it not for the belief
in the 'breath of men', pagan chiefs and headmen would act
tyrannically.

The situations in which a chief or headman fears the breath of
men are very varied. We have already referred to the chief who [754]
thought his illness was due to his refusal to hold the 'coming out'
for his sons when advised to do so.[1] Mwaipopo, before whose
court a very bitter land dispute between two of his villages had
been brought, refused to give judgement and was careful to sleep
in the village that had possession of the land, and therefore less
cause for anger.[2] Kasitile, the hereditary priest of the chief's
lineage who counted as 'a chief' as opposed to 'a commoner',
thought he had angered the village headmen of his generation
(who had become priests) by not providing meat for them
(*vide infra*, p. 125).

The headmen are responsible for the health of their chief and it
is they who go to consult an oracle if he is ill and take him to a
doctor. Mwankuga II (151), heir to Mwaipopo's chiefdom, had not [842]
begotten a son by any of the wives he inherited from his elder
brother who had died. His village headmen[3] went to consult an [753]
oracle and were told that it was the wrath (*imindu*) of his father; [787]
so they reported the matter to Mwaipopo, who sent a junior
kinsman to consult another oracle. The diagnosis was confirmed
and Mwaipopo gathered his younger brothers and prayed and [782]
told the shades that he had no quarrel with his kinsmen. Then he
told the village headmen to take Mwankuga to a doctor for
treatment, but this they did not do, so that Mwankuga went to
consult a doctor on his own. According to Kasitile it was because
the headmen had not taken Mwankuga that the medicine did
not work. 'They should take him to the doctor and be present in
dreams, to watch over him in dreams.' What the headmen were
angry about was not revealed—there was no obvious cause.

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[1] *op. cit.*, pp. 134-5 [2] *op. cit.*, pp. 188-90.

[3] Mwankuga I who died had 'come out' before Mwankuga II inherited from him, but Mwaipopo (118) continued to rule as chief and draw a Government salary.

643 As we have seen, the chief's fearsome medicine *inyifwila* is
778 thought to be very dangerous, and too much in the tails may cause
622 them 'to fly about throttling men and cattle', but a chief is never
[754] accused of working witchcraft; it is inconceivable to the Nyakyusa
that he could be. If the tails have got out of hand they are treated
[789] by a doctor 'to close them up'; no one suggests that the chief should
get rid of them. It is commoners, 'black people', who are witches—cannibals, the eaters of raw flesh—as opposed to chiefs who, since the dawn of history, have killed cattle for meat and cooked their food like civilized men. But the distinction does not extend very far; junior kinsmen of the chief are 'commoners' and may well be accused of practising witchcraft.

There was a delicate balance of power in the Nyakyusa con-
[182] stitution between hereditary chief and commoner headmen and
the belief in the power of medicines and of witchcraft was an integral part of it. The chief provided fruitfulness by the power of his own body and his medicines; all men depended upon him for their well-being—food, cattle, children, success in war; but he in his turn depended upon the goodwill of his men led by their village headmen; without it he shivered and fell ill, only to be buried by them 'with the breath still in his body' lest the power of growth disappear with his breathless corpse.

Something of the quality of this mutual dependence and fear is conveyed in Kasitile's account of his own illness quoted in Chapter VIII.

(*e*) THE NECESSITY FOR HARMONY

182 The welfare of the chiefdom is thought to depend upon
643 harmony between the chief and his village headmen and priests,
and also between the chief and his kinsmen. Any friction between
622 them may result in public misfortune as well as sickness to the
793 individual at fault. The quarrel of Kasitile, the priest, first with
[753] the Kinga priests, and then with the commoner priests of Mwal-
[821] popo's chiefdom was believed to affect the crops and the weather,
as well as Kasitile's own health (*vide infra*, pp. 124-41), and
Mwaipopo's failure to tell Kasitile formally of the death of their
[688] kinsman led to rain which spoiled the funeral dance. A quarrel
between the lineages of two chiefs which should have sacrificed
643 together was said to have been followed by a very poor millet
602 crop (*vide infra*, pp. 79-80, 118, 136).

578 How the personal relationship of a chief with his kinsmen is

thought to affect the whole country was illustrated in Mwaihojo's 643
chiefdom where the people were plagued by wild pig destroying 602
their gardens. Mwaihojo (147) had a longstanding quarrel with 578
his half-brother, Mwakyonde (148), whose country he had seized after their 'coming out'. Mwakyonde became famous as a doctor, and he was a great raconteur and beer-drinker, a regular Silenus, [157]
the boon companion of many influential men, whereas his brother was cold and irascible; so although he had lost his chieftaincy, Mwakyonde had considerable power. In February 1937, four lions were seen in the adjoining chiefdom of Mwaipopo (116), and we heard pig squealing as it was killed. Angombwike (whose father lived near Mwakyonde in Mwaihojo's country) explained to us: 'People say that these are Mwakyonde's lions. . . . Lion- [754]
makers have bundles of twigs which they put into the long grass, [789]
and which turn into lions. Long ago Mwakyonde made lions and they came and killed all the pigs, and the country (Mwaihojo's) was at peace, but he quarrelled with Mwaihojo and put his bundles of twigs into his box and locked it up. Then the country was filled with pig, and buck, and elephant, and all the crops were spoiled, and so it is still. Now Mwakyonde has begun to be friendly with Mwaipopo (116); they enjoy each other's company and drink beer together, and so he is making lions again in Kipungu, the land where Mwaipopo is hoeing, to kill the pig for Mwaipopo. They say Mwaipopo has given him a country in secret.' Now Mwaihojo claimed as his the forest country, which Mwaipopo's men had begun to colonize, therefore to aid Mwaipopo there was an effective slap at Mwaihojo. The lions came into Mwaihojo's country—we heard them repeatedly close to our camp—but they did not clear the pig.

Then, in March, Mwakyonde was supposed to be using a new [778]
medicine he had obtained to scare off pig from the fields. We asked him about it. 'Oh, it has failed. The pigs are still there eating. I've done everything I should but without effect. I think [775]
that the pigs are possessed by the shades (*sili nimindu ingulube*).' 'Why?' we asked. 'Because my elder brother (Mwaihojo) and I are not on good terms (*tutikwangala kanunu*) the shades are angry.'

So the destruction of men's gardens was traced to the quarrel between the chief and his brother.

CHAPTER V

SACRIFICES AT THE GROVES OF CHIEFS

(a) THE PLACE, OCCASION, AND FORM OF SACRIFICE

778. 769 [137] A CHIEF is buried near the trees planted at his 'coming out' and around the grave a thicket grows up. It is taboo for men to cut saplings or brushwood there and since trees grow very fast in the climate and soil of the Nyakyusa valley, the thicket soon becomes a grove, and there sacrifices to the dead chief are made. The priests look for the stone planted at his marriage, and place the offering beside it. How long a chief is so honoured depends on how conspicuous he was as a ruler or warrior, and perhaps also on [782] whether the sacrifices are judged to be efficient in producing rain and health or not. Mbyanga and Kabale, two groves which are particularly honoured, were the shrines of founders of expanding lineages. At Mbyanga was planted a cutting of a tree which sprouted from the grave of Mwakisambwe (30) who had first occupied the country in which Mbyanga is situated. He is often spoken of as having been 'buried' at Mbyanga, in fact he was carried back ten miles to Lubaga, whence he had come, for burial. But he is worshipped at Mbyanga and we attended a sacrifice there for which his great-great-great-grandson, Mwaihojo (147) the chief, provided a cow, and Mwaihojo's grandsons ate the holy food. In contrast to this, the grave of Mwaipopo's (116) younger brother, who had once ruled a country but was defeated in war and whose sons had died, was completely neglected; no one sacrificed there. We knew more than a dozen chiefs' groves at which sacrifices were made, and there must have been a great many more in different parts of BuNyakyusa.

643 769 Since every ruling chief normally had two heirs, sacrifices involved co-operation between independent chiefdoms—two chiefs at the grove of their father, four at that of their grandfather, and so on. But if there is friction between the chiefs, some branches of the lineage cease to participate, saying that the connexion is 'too distant', and celebrate at the groves of their nearer ancestors only. This happened at the sacrifice of Mbyanga which we [578] [688] attended (*vide infra*, pp. 79-81). The sanction for co-operation is the belief that quarrelling between kinsmen annoys the shades and

may nullify any ritual, but often it is not strong enough to overcome the fissiparous tendencies of the lineage. In theory a celebration at the grove of a senior should precede that at the grove of a junior and sacrifices at Lubaga would be followed by sacrifices at the groves of the 'sons of Lwembe' in order of seniority, but this does not happen in practice nowadays and we doubt whether it ever did, since a hierarchy was not organized and maintained by a central authority as in Ngonde. In 1935 a celebration at the grove of Mwaijonga (82) preceded one at the grove of his great-grandfather Mwakisambwe (30) by a month, as we shall see. 643 769 [578] [688]

Sacrifices are made when a drought or flood occurs, or a plague of locusts, or an epidemic among men or cattle; when fishing is poor in the chiefdoms of the plain, or war is imminent. They occur most often during the 'winter' in the hills, when a malaria-sodden people feel the chill of damp mists and cool south winds, and in October, just before the break of the rains, when the country is parched; but they are not confined to these periods. In theory the village headmen and the priests who 'watch over the country' foresee *coming* misfortune in dreams, and avert it by making the appropriate sacrifices. And they are helped by ordinary people who are dreaming repeatedly or falling into a trance or fit, and prophesying evil and jabbering of 'a black cow, a black cow' or some other appurtenance of sacrifice. But in practice the prophecies generally occur when there is hunger or plague in the land, or an omen (such as a python or a ground hornbill behaving oddly) has been seen. [731] [782] [787]

The dreamers are *abasololi* or *abakunguluka*, and, as these names indicate, they are believed to have descended into the land of the shades. *Ukusoloka*[1] means to go down into something, like the roots of a tree into the earth, and *ukukungula ingungula* means to pluck a banana flower which (as was shown in *Rituals of Kinship*) is a symbol for a corpse and is buried; so the *abakunguluka* are those who have been buried in the earth. '*Abakunguluka* go to the land of the shades and return. . . . An *unkunguluka* plucks up the "blessed grass" (*ikisajelo*) in his swept courtyard and goes beneath and sees.[2] . . . He goes down into the earth beneath and takes the chief to the land of the shades when he dies, and he also sees the witches. . . .' More rarely, the *unsololi* or *unkunguluka* is 791 787

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[1] *Ukusoloka*—a breech presentation, the implication being that the infant's head is in *[illegible]*, but children born in this way are not necessarily prophets. [845]

[2] cf. Monica Wilson, *Rituals of Kinship*, pp. 77, 212.

791 said just to become aware of future events without any dream.

787 *Abakunguluka* are distinguished from those who suffer from fits or fall into trances (*abakom' amalago*), but a woman in a trance may also prophesy and induce the chief and priests to celebrate a ritual, for it is thought that she too is in communication with the shades. Men say 'The shade has entered her' or 'Kyala catches hold of her that she may speak of the matter'. This type of prophecy is something new among the Nyakyusa. Mwandisi (107) told us that 'it [177] did not exist in BuKinga whence we came', but had been introduced from the south, through Ngonde, and it is mainly confined to women, whereas the *abakunguluka* are men.

There are many tales of famous prophecies. Nsamba (90) 787 claimed that his father (63) foretold that 'there will come a white thing on the Lake, and it will land on the shore. That will be the man who will make peace', and Mwakalinga (142) who died fighting the Germans is said to have foretold his own death.[1]

Dreams and revelations of the possessed concerning public matters are reported to the local village headman and referred to the other headmen and priests, and a prophecy is accepted as valid only after formal discussion. As we shall see, Kasitile was sceptical about the revelations of one man who was repeatedly 'possessed', perhaps because he threatened to become a rival in interpreting public misfortune. If there is doubt, suspicions are confirmed or problems elucidated, by divination.

When they judged a sacrifice necessary the village headman and 769 priests went to their chief saying, 'We do not sleep', and it was his 782 obligation to secure an animal for sacrifice. He might provide it out of his own herd, but very often the duty of 'finding' sacrificial cattle was delegated to a junior line—the ruling chief gave cattle to a younger brother charging him and his heirs with the function of providing sacrificial cattle when necessary. Today [177] all the chiefs are reluctant to expend cattle on rituals whose validity is questioned, and there is often friction between the [643] senior and junior lines over who should 'find' the cow or bull required. Their reluctance is illustrated by the following passage from Godfrey Wilson's diary:

Mwaya (on the lake shore): 22/12/34

It is still stormy; there has been wind and heavy rain for four days. People are saying: 'We are hungry. It is very bad. We need light rain

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[1] According to Mr. Harkin's informant the Sarabwe eruption was foretold a year before it occurred. *Tanganyika Notes and Records*, 40 (1955), p. 21.

769 782 [177] [643]

for planting, but now all the fields are muddy, we can neither hoe nor plant.' Five days ago there was no rain but locusts, and people did not plant for fear lest the locusts should eat the rice and maize as it sprouted. Kissoule tells me: 'Kyala is very angry. . . . Mwandisi (107, the priest-chief) wants to pray to put things right, he has sent Mwalulaboeya to ask Mwakisisile (170, the ruling chief) for a cow. Mwalulaboeya and Mwakalobo went and the chief agreed saying: "I have not got one now, but I will look for one!" Then Mwalulaboeya sent me (Kissoule) to fetch it, but the chief refused saying: "I am busy now." Then Mwandisi (107), who is blind and infirm, went himself, but still there is no cow.'

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The priests who minister to dead chiefs, like the priests of Lubaga, are of different types. The senior village headmen of a dead chief are responsible for conducting sacrifices at his grove in co-operation with his heir, and when a headman dies his office is taken over by his heir. Where a grove is much honoured this continues for generations and the heirs of one of the village headmen become hereditary keepers of the grove, each incumbent of the office assuming his name. Secondly, there are chiefs of a junior line, who become hereditary priests on whom the ruling chiefs depend for their prayers, but these priest-chiefs do not actually attend the sacrifices; the celebration is delegated to commoner priests and junior kinsmen. Mwandisi (107) mentioned above, Kasitile (86) and Nsamba (90) were all priest-chiefs of this sort. Kasitile prayed at his own home, blowing out water before any celebration in Mwaipopo's country, and he was given the chine of any animal sacrificed on behalf of the country. If this were not done 'all the cattle in the country would die . . . it is the most important part of the meat'. The commoner priests who conducted the ritual always shared the head of the sacrificial beast and the breast went to the chief. With priest-chiefs, as with commoner chiefs, the name of the first incumbent of the office (or an early and famous incumbent) may become a hereditary title, e.g. three generations of priests in Selya have been known as *Kasitile*.

769 782

The essential elements in the ritual are: the sacrifice of a black bull or cow in the grove; the offering up of the blood and pieces of the sacred meat from the forelegs, together with the beer, on the earth close to a sacred stone and near a sacred tree; an invocation calling on the shades to come and feast, and petitions for rain, fertility, and health. One piece of meat is thrown down for

769 782 I kept the chine for two nights in my house. The shades come to eat—they left practically nothing. Had I not been ill I would have asked you to come and see since you say they do not eat. . . . The shades come and see that we are celebrating the rituals.

The whole ritual was esoteric. Only the chief with eight of his [792] agnatic kinsmen, four of his young sons (but not his grown-up ● [643] heir or young grandsons), and four priests participated, and we [123] two anthropologists were permitted to look on. Peeping small boys were chased off. The shades were addressed in a conversational tone and, except during the invocation, the priests and [784] chiefs chatted to one another, but arguments and raised voices were taboo. The boys who ate the meat were told:

[869] See, we your fathers are sacrificing, we are making plenty of food. Follow the custom of your fathers when it is your turn to sacrifice. Learn how to do it.

The same evening Kasitile prayed at his tree again. He explained:

I would not usually pray at all tonight, it is finished. Mwaipopo and I prayed yesterday, today the ritual is finished, but that boy of mine [his heir, 119] does not visit me, he's not been to see me and he did not tell me that he was going to the ritual. . . . I am going to pray to tell my fathers not to be startled, to tell them I am not angry, to tell them to send only a little rain, not a lot, to tell them to accept the sacrifice.

He went to the same place, and chewed the root of 'blessed grass' and blew out water as before. He prayed to about thirty persons, especially to Mwamalisha (85, his elder brother) and Mwakanjoki (60, his father), and also to Mwakagile (39), Mwaijonga (82), Mwaipasi (81), Mwakalinde (117), Mwamwila (84), Mwafongo (83), Mwakipesile (118), Mwakapala (?), Lyambilo (12), Mwalubange (38), Mwamukinga (43), Mwailojo (147?), Mwaitende (61), and Kyala (1). No mention was made of the Lubaga chiefs this time, or of sons of Mwaipaja (21) or of 'Jesus'.

You have received your child Mwakagile (118, identified with his grandfather 39), Mwaijonga (82), you have received the chief, this boy of mine (119) is quarrelling with me, do not be upset, he is a fool, a fool, but let him be . . . go and call your brothers to eat, you Mwaijonga (82), you Mwaipopo (113), and all your younger brothers; call Mwakagile (39) and Mwakanjoki (60) . . . Mwalubange (38) go to eat with your younger brother, let us find food, millet, bananas, children, milk . . . let there be a little rain only, not too much . . . people believe

9: Wilson E-5 (1934-1955) 1959
FN17 Ngonde FN17
Nyakyusa

NOTE

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Chiefdoms do not have names which continue indefinitely. They are referred to by the name of the ruling chief or one of his illustrious ancestors, and often several different names are in common use for one chiefdom. To simplify the map we have assigned a number to each chiefdom held by a segment of the Nyakyusa or Kukwe lineages (*vide* genealogies, pp. 3, 27), and these numbers are plotted on the map. The map is based on that of Mr. R. de Z. Hall (sometime D.C., Tukuyu) and includes all, or almost all, the Nyakyusa and Kukwe chiefdoms recognized by the Administration.[1] The Penja, Nyiha, Ndali, Lambya, and Safwa chiefdoms on the fringes of the valley are indicated, but not plotted. The map does *not* include all chiefdoms recognized in some fashion by the Nyakyusa themselves, e.g. Mwaibungula (178) 'came out' in 1953 and has been established at some distance from his elder brother with his own senior headman, but he is not recognized by the Administration as a chief and therefore his domain is not included on the map as a separate chiefdom.

[177]

[1] Two names listed by Mr. Hall are omitted, Ali Bin Omari because he is an immigrant and Mwakalinga of Kinyala because he is the son of a commoner appointed as headman by the German *Administration*, and not a member of older royal lineage.

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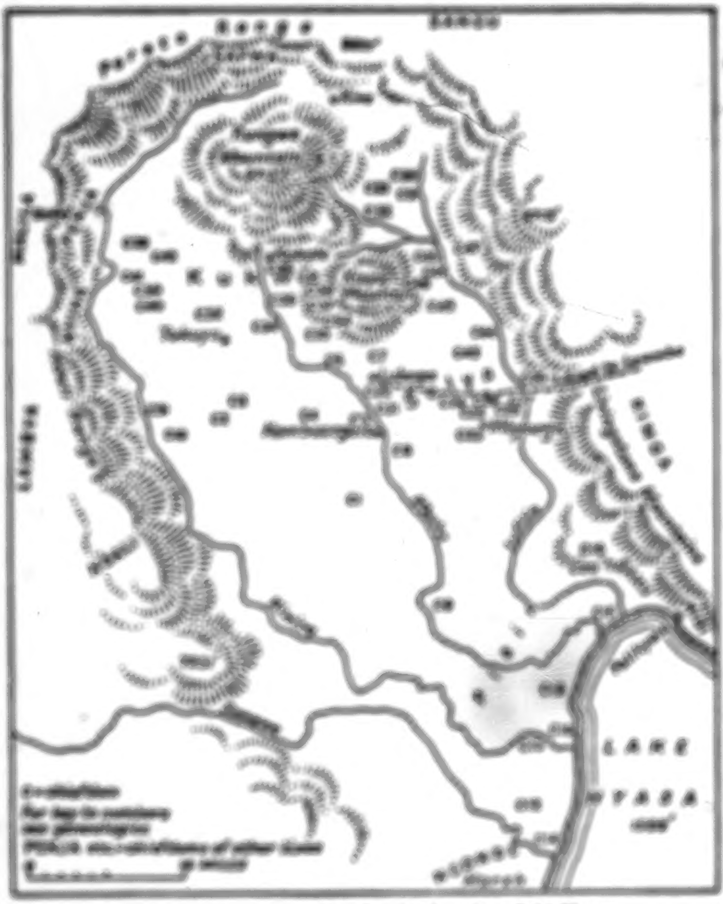

Map III. Nyakyusa valley showing location of chiefdoms

CHAPTER VI

LAND AND POWER

643 THE crux of the chiefs' 'coming out' was a redistribution of power 561 and of land, and we must pause in our description of the ritual 423 cycle to discuss the relation between chiefdoms and villages and the land, and to consider more closely the balance of power between successive generations.

(a) THE TERRITORIAL ALIGNMENT OF CHIEFDOMS AND VILLAGES

173 361 Tradition makes it clear that the heroes came to a sparsely occupied country and that their descendants gradually spread out as their numbers increased. The settlers chose to live on hillocks overlooking the surrounding country. Lubaga and [103] Mbande, the seats of the two 'divine kings' are commanding sites. [778] The grove of Kabale, where the ancestors of the Kukwe chiefs first established themselves, is on an eminence rising from the plateau, and Kambasekela (near the Mbaka bridge) on which the early chiefs Mwaipaja (21) and Mwaipopo (26) were buried is a hill very like Mbande, overlooking the plain.

361 Unlike most of their neighbours the Nyakyusa show a preference for cleared and cultivated land, planted with bamboos and the [824] oil-bearing *amapagati* trees (*Trichilia spp.*)[1] as well as the great *amasali* (*Chlorophora excelsa*) which, in their view, adds dignity to the homestead.[2] A study of the trees planted at the 'coming out' and the sacred groves in Mwaipopo's chiefdom (C 24)[3] shows that for four generations the ruling chiefs (descendants of Mwaijonga 80) have established their principal villages within a quarter of a mile of one another, and for seven generations the descendants of Mwakisambwe (90) have lived within two or three miles of one another (*vide* plan, p. 101), though there were acres of fertile land

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[1] I am indebted to Mr. P. B. Nightingale, Forestry Officer, Tukuyu, for giving me the botanical names of these and other trees.

[2] cf. Monica Wilson, *Good Company*, pp. 77-8.

[3] C followed by a number is the reference number of a chiefdom as listed in the genealogies of chiefs.

[p. 88]

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FN17 Ngonde
Nyakyusa

Chart showing position of sections of chart on "Villages of Mwaipopo' Chiefdom." (Facing page 91)

A	B
C	D

[illegible] Wilson [illegible] (1934-1955) 1959

[illegible]

Nyakyusa

[illegible]

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Gen.	Chief	Village	Headman	Structural Position	Land
I	[illegible] ([illegible])	[illegible]	[illegible]	Senior village of [illegible]	
		[illegible]	[illegible]		
		[illegible]	[illegible]	Second senior village of [illegible]	Moved for [illegible]
		[illegible]			
		[illegible]			
II	[illegible] I ([illegible])	[illegible]	[illegible] ([illegible])	Sons of [illegible] and [illegible]	Moved for [illegible]
	[illegible] II ([illegible])				
		[illegible]	[illegible]		Moved for [illegible]
		[illegible]		Older section of [illegible]	Moved to [illegible] [illegible] II
		[illegible]			
		[illegible]		Contemporaries of [illegible] II	
		[illegible]	[illegible]	Much younger men than those of [illegible]	
		[illegible]	[illegible]		
		[illegible]	[illegible]	Sons of [illegible]	
		[illegible]	[illegible]		
		[illegible]	[illegible]		
		[illegible]	[illegible]		
III	[illegible] I ([illegible])	[illegible]	[illegible] ([illegible]) [illegible] [illegible]	Sons of [illegible]	
	[illegible] II ([illegible]) active [illegible]				
		[illegible]		Younger brothers and a few sons of [illegible]	
		[illegible]	[illegible] (active [illegible])		Moved for [illegible]
		[illegible]	[illegible]	Sons of [illegible] and [illegible]. Younger men than in [illegible]	[illegible]
		[illegible]		Younger brothers of [illegible]	Moved [illegible]
		[illegible] (junior section)	[illegible]	Sons of [illegible]	
		[illegible]	[illegible] ([illegible])	Sons of [illegible]	
		[illegible]	[illegible]	Younger sons of [illegible]	
		[illegible]	[illegible]	Younger sons of [illegible]	
		[illegible]	[illegible]	Sons of [illegible]	
		[illegible]	[illegible]	Sons of [illegible]	
		[illegible]	[illegible]	New village	Colony in the
		[illegible]	[illegible] ([illegible])	New village	Colony in the

[facing p. 91; section A]

[illegible] (1934-1955) 1959

[illegible]

Nyakyusa

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632
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631
551

[illegible]

[illegible]

643
632
103
63/
551

[illegible]

[facing p. 91; Section C]

9: Wilson E-5 (1934-1955) 1959

F3017 Ngonde F3017

Nyakyusa

[illegible]

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	[illegible]	
	[illegible]	
		[illegible] sub-chief
Colony in [illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Colony in [illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
		[illegible]
	[illegible]	[illegible]
	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]		[illegible]
		[illegible] 'came out' [illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible] 'coming out'. [illegible]
	[illegible]	
	[illegible]	
		[illegible]
		Names of villages of generation IV not ascertained.
		Names of villages of generation IV not ascertained.
Colony in [illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]

[illegible] villages established in generation IV added.

[facing p. 91; section D]

fashion. Each village is occupied by an age-set and men are emphatic that age and friendship, not kinship, are the basis of a village, but the villages of fathers, sons, and grandsons commonly, though not invariably, adjoin one another, as Bujege, Igembe, and Lupando, or Lupondo, Njisi, and Iringa in Mwaipopo's chiefdom (*vide* plan, p. 101). Each section of a chiefdom comprises half the ruling generation, and interspersed with their villages are those of their fathers and sons. Men are identified by the name of their village, section, and chief; the village name defines their age-set, the name of section and chief their generation. The section name is always that of the senior village which leads it. Generation succeeds generation in office when their heirs 'come out', but the relative position of villages (age-sets) within a generation remains constant. Since chiefdoms traditionally split each generation at the 'coming out' the men of the retired generation who remained belonged to one section only; those of the other section of their generation were members of another chiefdom. The territorial arrangements reflected in the plan of Mwaipopo's chiefdom on p. 101 are modified by the fact that the chiefdom has not split for four generations. In generation I Kibonde was the portion of the junior heir, Mwafungo (83), but he died young and his land and widow were inherited by the senior brother, Mwaijonga (82). The son of this leviratical union, Mwakipesile (118), went through the 'coming out' in generation II along with Mwaijonga's heirs, Ijonga (114, representing her full brother 115), and Mwakalobule (117). Mwakipesile inherited Kibonde and Mwakalobule inherited Kitali, but both were later defeated in war by Mwaipopo II and their land incorporated in his chiefdom. Mwakipesile's heir, Likonyela, and Mwakalobule remained as subordinate chiefs. Though the girl Ijonga celebrated the 'coming out' in place of her unborn brother she could not rule, and Mwaitemeja, son of Mwaijonga II (younger full brother of 82) acted for her. He was finally defeated by Mwaipopo II and fled to the periphery of the country. Kabula was his village, and he was subordinate to Mwaipopo, not independent.

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[602]
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[726]
[643]

In generation III the chiefdom did not split because by that time the British administration was in control, and the territorial division remained much the same, Igembe and Njisi becoming the senior villages in place of Bujege and Lupando, with Mwambuga (130) and Mwaseba (132) as the young chiefs. Kibonde,

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system is still the accepted form in Mwaipopo's chiefdom; the 631
advantages of separating kinsmen in different villages are ex- 166
plicitly stated, and the contrast between the Nyakyusa and their 561
neighbours in this respect emphasised. 'Certainly we do not live 361
with kinsmen here but the Kinga do.' 'It is not good for a son to [183]
live close to his father, they will quarrel.' 'When we move to [602]
another village we consider friendship not kinship in selecting it.'

(*b*) THE BALANCE BETWEEN GENERATIONS AND SECTIONS

The ritual cycle of the 'coming out' and the sacrifices in the 645
groves helped to maintain a balance of power between generations, 561
as well as between chiefs and commoners. At the 'coming out' of 796
Mwanyilu (177) in 1953 it was Mwabuputa, the senior village headman of his father, who took the leading part. He was described as 'the greatest man in the country' who 'brings out the chief' and his manner indicated that he was well aware of his power. During the reign of Mwaipopo (116) the power of his [554]
father's village headmen, Njobakosa and Ngulyo, was apparent at every ritual. Spiritual power was shared between chiefs and commoners, but exercised ideally by a virile chief of the ruling generation and the experienced headmen of the retired generation.

Those chosen as senior village headmen at the 'coming out' [622]
are commonly older than the young chief, but village headmen [782]
are thought of as surviving their chief—it is they who were responsible for smothering him, and performing the sacrifices in his grove. The headmanship is an *office* and so long as the office is necessary an incumbent is found for it, in the person of the heir of the original holder who is so closely identified with the deceased that most precise inquiry is often necessary to establish whether a given individual is the original holder, the succeeding heir, or a later heir, successor to the successor. The Ngulyo who officiated at the rituals in 1935 was the heir of the original Ngulyo (some said [554]
the *grandson*, not the son) and he was criticised by Kasitile as being [769]
'a young man who knew nothing'. The principle, so familiar in Central Africa, of a perpetual office[1] emerges, among the

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[1] I. Cunnison, *Kinship and Local Organization on the Luapula*, Communications of the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute No. 5 (1950), pp. 19–25; J. C. Mitchell, *The Yao Village*, Manchester (1956), p. 100; A. I. Richards, *Land, Labour and Diet in Northern Rhodesia*, O.U.P. (1939), p. 114; 'Some Types of Family Structure among the Central Bantu', in *African Systems of Kinship and Marriage*, p. 229; J. Roscoe, *The Baganda*, London (1911), p. 3. [113]

643 Nyakyusa, when sacrifices are continued in the grove of a dead chief
561 such as Mwakisambwe (90), for an indefinite number of genera-
796 tions, and the heirs of his senior village headmen serve as his
[769] priests, taking the name of the first holder of the office. Most of the
[793] priests of Lubaga held perpetual titles of this sort. The conception
of the *corporation sole* is familiar enough in the western tradition, but European observers in Africa are sometimes confused by the use of a personal name and the almost complete identification of each holder with his predecessors, as well as by the practice of treating certain kinship relationships as if they were offices.

Generation was determined among the Nyakyusa by associa-
561 tion with a chief. There was no name for those who 'came out'
796 together other than that of their chief, who was the focus of the
173 ritual. On the other hand, however, a 'coming out' concerned a
634 whole generation, and it could not be held out of season. If the
[611] heir died he was replaced by a brother, as were Mwaipopo I
(113) and Mwankuga I (130). If a chief had no male heir of the right age in his senior house his daughter might represent an heir. For example, at the coming out of the sons of Mwaijonga, it was a *girl* Ijonga (114) who performed the leading part in the ritual which fell due before the birth of Mwaipopo I (113). When Mwaipopo I was born and grew up he assumed office, but he died young and was replaced by his younger brother without a further celebration. Because the 'coming out' was thus linked to the maturity of a whole generation we have felt some confidence in assigning approximate dates to the arrival of the heroes. The period between each 'coming out' we estimate at thirty to thirty-five years, though the higher figure is probably more nearly correct. There must in fact have been some flexibility in the timing of the 'coming out' to account for the differences in the number of generations of ruling chiefs in different segments of the lineage. Some of the differences may be due to errors (e.g. it is possible that 70 is an elder brother not the father of 98, and that a generation has been omitted between Mwakapeje (34) and Mwakago (75)), but even where there is little possibility of error the number of generations does not always tally.

643 In theory a man always belongs to the generation succeeding
561 that of his father, irrespective of his age, provided he has not
622 inherited from a man of the previous generation and taken his
status, but in practice, since men often have sons of very different

ages, they sometimes build in villages of different generations. 561
When it comes to the selection of village headmen, however, 643
care is taken to ensure that they are indeed sons of men who came 622
out with the previous chief, and a village like Katumba which comprised both younger brothers and sons of Mwankuga's generation breaks up, some members 'coming out' with Mwankuga's son, others acting as 'fathers'. Within a village all the members are equal subject to their headman, but a hierarchy of villages is clear.

The pre-eminence of the two senior village headmen of a chief 631
is marked. They alone make fire with him at the 'coming out'. 643
They alone are handed war tails with which to lead their men in [393]
battle. Each is responsible for one half of the country and a dispute [778]
not settled by the headman of the village of the defendant is reported to the senior headman in whose side of the country the village lies, and he brings it before the chief. Each senior headman has his own village, the two senior villages of the country, in which the royal ladies live; the senior wife married at the 'coming out' is established close to the senior village headman, the second wife close to the second senior headman. A chief may establish wives in a number of villages, and some at least of those he inherits from his father continue to live in his father's old homestead 'to sweep the graves', but his capitals (*ifikangalala*) are the two senior villages of the country in which his two senior wives and two senior village headmen live[1] and the names of the capitals are used not only for the senior villages but for the half sections of the generation they lead. The importance of the two senior headmen is apparent even when their generation has handed over political authority to their sons. At the sacrifices we have described Njobakosa and Ngalya, heirs of the senior headmen of the chief Mwaijonga (82) officiated, and at the 'coming out' of Mwanyila (177) it was Mwambapusa and Kabuje his father's senior headmen who organized the ritual.

Each village established at a 'coming out' is a clearly defined 621
unit with its own land, and leader, and name, but villages are also 631
segments of larger units, the half-section of the chiefdom under a 561
senior headman, and the whole chiefdom under the leadership of

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[1] Mwanyila (177), though he had two senior headmen, established his two senior wives in one house, close to the house of Kilambo his most senior headman. This was explained as a temporary measure 'because they were young', but it is not the traditional pattern, and may be linked with the fact that the splitting of the country each generation is no longer accepted as the inevitable pattern.

62| the chief himself. The members of each village co-operate in some
56| measure in cultivation and herding and they form a defensive group against attack 'by day and by night'—i.e. against armed
63| raiders and witches.[1] But there is no great elaboration of ritual for single villages. Such village rituals as occur are connected with
[781] defence against witchcraft and involve driving out a supposed
[751] witch, or receiving back a member who has fled from fear of witchcraft, or protecting the village fields against witches.[2] Most communal rituals are organized on the basis of the chiefdom or group of chiefdoms, and villages or sections participate as segments of the chiefdom.

The principle of generation and that of section hold one another in check. All those who have 'come out' together have a strong sense of unity as opposed to the generations of their fathers and sons, but every generation is split into two sections each led by an heir of the chief, and these sections have a certain territorial solidarity. It is common in Africa for organized age-groups to cut across kinship and territorial groups. The Nyakyusa peculiarity lies in the territorial unity of age-sets which occupy villages, and the manner in which the fissiparous tendencies within a chiefdom have a constitutional outlet in the rivalry between the sections of a ruling generation which become independent at the 'coming out' of the next generation.

The combination of the hereditary and selective principles of leadership among the Nyakyusa is also somewhat different from that among their neighbours. With many Central African people the heir to the holder of the office of village headman or chief is *selected*, and the most capable member of a given lineage or lineage
[643] segment appointed.[3] Among the Nyakyusa succession is precisely defined and there is no selection of a suitable heir except to the
[602] supreme and greatly feared office of 'divine king', but the selective principle is given full scope in the 'catching' of leaders for the young men's villages at every 'coming out'. It is this combination of the hereditary and selective principles which binds together chiefs and commoners and successive generations. The rules of

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[1] Monica Wilson, *Good Company*, pp. 44–65, 91–123.

[2] *op. cit.*, pp. 30–4, 105 ff., 134–8, 170–4.

[3] I. Cunnison, 'Headmanship and Ritual of Luapula Villages', *Africa*, xxvi (1956), p. 11; M. G. Marwick, 'The Social Context of Cewa Witch Beliefs', *Africa*, xxii (1952), pp. 215–33; V. Turner, 'Ndembu Village Structure', *Africa*, xxv (1955), pp. 125–41; J. C. Mitchell, *The Yao Village*, Manchester (1956), pp. 133–49.

inheritance ensure that a limited number of young men are 621
absorbed into the senior generation and live with the older men, 561
sharing their activities and from time to time holding office as 631
headmen or priests of that generation, and the selection in each [643] ●
generation of young men who are *not* the sons of village headmen,
or chiefs, or headmen of the past generation, ensures that com- [622]
moners without office are constantly recruited to the hierarchy of
rulers. In short, power is distributed.

(*c*) RITUAL AND SECULAR BONDS

As in so many societies, economic and ritual links extended, 631
traditionally, further than political links.[1] Selya was dependent 782
upon BuKinga for iron and the Kinga came to fruitful Selya to
pray for fertility. The priests who came to pray brought the hoes.
The many independent chiefdoms of Selya and the Mbaka valley [643]
acknowledged the spiritual overlordship of the Lwembe by
sending sacrifices to him, and it was through the network of [793]
hereditary priests like Kasitile, Mwamakunda, Mwalukuta, and
Nyama of Selya, and the Kinga priests Kikungubeja, Nsyanigwa,
Kyamba Kitali, and Silobwike that wider bonds were maintained.
Mwaipopo (116) when he was granted a Court which gave him
the secular leadership of Selya, failed to make any acknowledge-
ment of Lwembe's traditional power, and it was Kasitile who
later urged him to do so. The western chiefdoms of the Nyakyusa [438]
still buy medicines and bark-cloth from the Ndali to the west, and
have done so for many generations, but no common ritual links
them as it does Selya and the plain with BuKinga. The trade was of [184]
lesser importance than that to the east, for it does not seem to
have included iron, though the Nyiha who share a common [326]
culture with the Lambya, the western neighbours of the Nyakyusa,
are known to have been skilled smiths.[2] With the Sangu to the [721]

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[1] cf. E. Colson, 'The Plateau Tonga of Northern Rhodesia' in *Seven Tribes of British Central Africa* (ed. Colson and Gluckman).

A comparison with the frontier in West and South Africa where economic and religious expansion compelled the establishment of Government is instructive. Cf. W. K. Hancock, *Survey of British Commonwealth Affairs*, vol. ii, part ii, pp. 160-8.

[2] D. Kerr-Cross, 'Geographical Notes on the Country between the Lakes Nyasa, Rukwa, and Tanganyika', *The Scottish Geographical Magazine*, vi (1890), p. 286. Elton's suggestion that some of the Nyakyusa iron came from the west is discussed by Cotterill. J. F. Elton, *The Lakes and Mountains of Eastern and Central Africa* (1879), p. 331 and map, cf. J. Thomson, *To the Central African Lakes and Back*, vol. i, p. 272.

631 782 [721] north the Nyakyusa were continually at war; they did not trade or pray with them. Thus we conclude that participation in a common ritual is, in the Nyakyusa case, directly linked with a common origin and essential trade.

643 [789] [782] [821] The divine kings, Lwembe and Kyungu, were regarded as having power over certain areas, a power closely linked with rainfall. Indeed, one informant argued that the chiefs living around Masoko had never sent sacrifices to Lubaga, 'because when it rains at Lubaga the rain does not come as far as Masoko'. He was mistaken in his facts—the chiefs of Masoko did at one time send to Lubaga as Mwambete (162), chief at Masoko, himself admitted—but the argument points to a conception of supernatural power tied to a rainfall area. This notion was not, however, applied consistently.

643 173 The balance between secular and mystical power has altered during the past ten generations. The founding heroes, Lwembe and Kyungu, came as conquerors and must surely have led their men personally; but early in the history of Ngonde the Kyungu was secluded, and power was exercised almost exclusively by the nobles (*vide supra*, pp. 40-46); and the Lwembe also was, at one period, 'not seen by ordinary men' and led a life hedged about with taboos. There is sharp contrast in Nyakyusa tradition between the active chiefs who were warriors, and arbitrators, and worked hard in their fields[1] and the 'divine king' who lived in seclusion. As we have seen, the chiefs often delegated ritual functions, with the taboos involved, to a junior kinsman such as Mwamukinga (44) or Mwakihaba (45) (*vide* pp. 79-81, 114) whose heirs succeeded to the office. It is even possible that the [178] first Lwembe at Lubaga (Mwakalebela 19) took over ritual functions *from his senior brother, Kalosi (18).*[2] *The present* tendency is for the development of secular power and its separation from mystical power. The Kyungu is no longer a god but an administrator: the heir of the Lwembes sits as an elected representative of chiefs on the Local Council. In the traditional 182 Nyakyusa society ritual played an essential part in maintaining 177 the balance between generations, sections, and social strata, and in

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[1] In 1955 a young chief was bitterly criticized by his own because he 'never had a hoe in his hands' whereas his father and grandfather had (to our personal knowledge) been diligent in hoeing.

[2] But according to one excellent informant, [illegible] (30) lived secluded while Mwakilima (31) 'fed men'—i.e. entertained.

the shades and the hearths which was stressed; in Porokoto's 783
country people talked mostly of the witches; but it seemed clear [754]
that both conceptions were present when men murmured: 'The [775]
hearth bricks are bad' (*amafiga mabibi*) and they sought to cleanse
them by clearing out the old fire and lighting new. 'To clear out
the ashes means they take away all that dirt, the dirt which the
witches have brought and the shades; it is the cause of illness.'
When witches are thought to be active there is also a public
complaint, and a public warning is given 'to whom it may
concern' to desist.[1] This occurred in the ritual after the ground
hornbill had eaten the chicken. Above all, men must admit their [578]
anger to one another: 'they fight that the homesteads may be
peaceful'. The theme so familiar in Nyakyusa rituals—that [681]
quarrels must be confessed if they are to be composed—recurs
yet again. Though we distinguish the rituals for 'cleansing the
country' from sacrifices, on the ground that the whole community participates in the 'cleansing' while the sacrifice is esoteric,
the two are closely linked, and a sacrifice commonly precedes or
follows the cleansing. We turn now to the detailed accounts of
celebrations for 'cleansing' in Ngonde and among the Kukwe.

(a) THE RATS

In Ngonde they used to clear out the ashes at the new year, at the 783
first hoeing (in December) after 'the break of the rains'. They feared 796
that death and disease would spread through the land if they continued
living with the old fires, that the shades in the earth, both the shades [758]
of chiefs and of commoners, would be angry. Let them drive the shades [761]
away and hoe in peace. They always remembered to do so each new
year; for the old men used to keep these things in mind continually,
they never forgot. The Kyungu would summon the whole country to
clear out the ashes; and then they would hoe in peace. And at other [787]
times, too, if prophecy came on someone, they would clear out the
ashes again. 'It is to drive away the shade with the sickness that he
brings. We throw out the ashes and firebrands because he has come to
warm himself over the fire in our houses, we throw out the pots and
winnowing baskets because he has come to see us eating; let him go
there (to the grove) and eat what he asked for—we say the shades ask [775]
for food—let him eat here, perhaps a sheep. We say the shades bring
sickness to the fire, hence we throw out the ashes and make new fire
with a drill.'

The nobles of Ngonde approached the Kyungu and he gave [643]

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[1] cf. Monica Wilson, *Good Company*, pp. [illegible].

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783 the order to clear out the ashes; messages were sent to the great
796 chiefs and the senior territorial nobles of the plain, and they told
[643] their juniors. A sacrifice was made in one of the sacred groves of the Kyungus and all fires in the whole Ngonde plain were put out. And then

> all the chiefs from every country near Mbande and the nobles and all the village headmen and all the ordinary men and women, too, went to Kyimbwe where we threw away the sickness of all the country.

At Kyimbwe, which is the crossroads in the bush, they threw away the ashes of their old fires, and some of the pots and baskets in which food is served; while those few people who could not get to Kyimbwe threw them away from their own houses on the same day as the others. At Kyimbwe new fire was made with a
[372] fire-drill by the nobles of Ngonde who

> ran with it without looking back and the people danced alongside them and speared one another! . . . They said, 'Let us dance, let us fight that the homesteads may be peaceful' . . . 'Let us throw out the ashes that death may leave the homesteads and they be at peace.' It is to bring out war from within (*ukumpwa*).

The symbolism is the same as in the rituals of kinship when kinsmen gather to admit their quarrels and press one another to speak out, so that they may cleanse themselves of anger.

The new fire was distributed to the whole plain in order. Great chiefs and senior nobles took it first and passed it to their juniors, chiefs passed to village headmen, and in each group the common people got it from their own ruling noble or their own village headman.

In July 1937, while we were visiting Ngonde, there was a
[784] plague of rats[1] which threatened the food supply, and Bungulo,
[156] the wife of a chief and well known as a prophetess, went into a
[791] trance and revealed that the rats were caused by the anger of the
[787] previous Kyungu and could be got rid of only by a ritual 'throwing out the rubbish' and sacrifice. Her husband reported the matter to Mwafongo, the premier noble of Ngonde, to whom the present Kyungu, Peter—at one time a Church member—had long since handed over all responsibility for communal rituals. Mwafongo called four of the leading chiefs who were pagan and a number of

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[1] Nothing new in Ngonde. Lord (then Captain) Lugard suffered from them in 1888. F. D. Lugard, *The Rise of our East African Empire* (1893), vol. I, p. 107. In 1937 the country swarmed with rats: in our own camp we killed 30 to 100 each night.

Mwandisi made a great deal of the fact that at the 'throwing out of the rubbish' the village headmen ate meat raw. 783 796

> Formerly . . . we threw away the ashes and charred brands . . . that is to drive away the shades who warm themselves over the hearth in the house; they bring us sickness, let them warm themselves over there in the long grass! Also in the long grass there we killed meat, and the priests ate it raw: no one saw them doing that there in the long grass; we went by day with drums, people from all the homesteads, a moving multitude . . . then we came home . . . the priests remained with their wives, they threw away their bark-cloths, they cut off morsels of meat and ate them raw. Because the priests are witches it is they who ate raw meat before we chiefs came, the priests are witches. . . . The witches and shades gather and bring sickness together, we kill a cow in the grove, we drive them away. No, they do not eat raw meat in the grove, they cook it. But at the capital if the chief has killed a cow for men to eat the priests eat meat raw. We have seen them. I, Mwandisi, have seen Mwaipile and Kalambo the senior village headmen eating raw meat at my place and my wives have seen them also. [262] [753] [793]

'Yes', said one of his wives, 'we saw them and we ran away saying: "Well! Fancy doing it openly!"' Mwandisi continued:

> The senior village headmen are witches, children of those who ate raw food long ago. Some village headmen only rush to eat a cow we have killed, but some go to eat a person; those are the witches who eat raw meat! [754]

> The function of a chief is to feed his men on beef, and in doing so he placates the witches who are commoners and who, like their forefathers, prefer their meat raw. If they do not get beef then the witches eat men.[1] [643] ●

(c) SMALLPOX

The prayer and 'clearing out of the rubbish', traditionally celebrated before an approaching epidemic, was described by an elderly Christian, Fibombe. It illustrates very clearly the combination of practical precaution—isolation—and magical protection, and also the idea that sickness was brought into the country by witches. 783 796 753

> When the chief had heard that smallpox was coming, or dysentery, he said, 'Let us pray'. Before my baptism I saw it, in the country of the

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[1] cf. Monica Wilson, *Good Company*, pp. 90-4.

789 them first, then his grandfather, and father. Others told us that rain stones always came from Kisi country, a very wet strip of 778 land on the north-east shore of the Lake where the clouds always seem to gather when one looks south from the Nyakyusa valley and plain, and a piece of perforated wood used in Ngonde for making rain came from the hills of Misuku, also a very wet country. Kasitile's stones were of two types, but no direct association of male and female was made. However, the Kukwe spoke of a 'mother' stone having young. 'The rain-maker puts back the stone in the potsherd without water (after rain has come) and going later he finds that it has got young, perhaps seven, with the mother there are eight.'

The rain-makers are subject to certain taboos: during the dry 791 season they may not wash lest they drive away the rain nor do they [784] shave for 'they compare hair and clouds saying, "Let it be black", they compare a bald pate with sunshine.' And the rain-maker [262] may not eat roasted maize 'for as the maize crackles in the potsherd when it is roasted, so the thunder will crackle in the sky'. He may not eat green maize (which is reaped during the rains) until the dry weather begins 'because he creates rain, which means he creates all the food which grows with the rain'. If he begins eating too soon he may stop the growth. And when the rain-maker is manipulating his instruments a sex taboo is observed. [834] 'When I am making rain,' said Kasitile, 'I do not sleep with my wives for two days, it's taboo. How would Kyala help us if I did?'

In theory the rain-maker always works under the direction of ● [243] the political authority—the Kyungu or a chief—but he is also thought to wreak vengeance on those who anger him. Kasitile was critical of his colleague in the hills above Isumba: 'He never makes a nice gentle rain, it always destroys food. . . . He is always demanding things from men, and, if they refuse, he brings his rain to destroy things. . . . There is a very strong wind and heavy rain which takes roofs off houses.' But when Kasitile himself was [860] angry, because his son was taken as a tax defaulter to work on the [687] roads, the weather grew bad.

> 789 People say I am angry, that this rain is because they came and beat me because of tax. This time the tax collectors came to my place and beat me and when I thought, 'It is not the custom with our forefathers for the tax collectors to come at all to men like me', I grew angry and prayed. . . . When I was in MaNgonde the country suffered from hunger, all their children were in trouble. . . . Then I came up, and

their wives took to wearing cloth they should earn it for themselves [77
by growing and selling millet and brewing beer, and many [595]
women do the clearing and hoeing in their fields, work that used to [462]
fall to men; but it is difficult for a chief to refuse to provide a man
to hoe the ridges in his wife's field, or to refuse an elderly woman a
cloth or some salt, and young heirs grumble much about their
encumbrances.

In the political field there has been a sustained attempt to make
local government more democratic and to include in it the educated [648]
men. Between 1891, when the German Government first assumed
control of the area, and 1938, the tendency was for the power of [649]
the chiefs to be increased at the expense of that of the commoners.
This was admitted by the chiefs themselves, as we have seen.
In 1949 there was established a system of Rural Councils, on [646]
which chiefs, village headmen (*amafumu*), and ordinary commoners
are represented. Four[*] of each category are chosen as representatives
on the Council in their area by an electoral college itself
elected by all taxpayers. Rungwe District is divided into five areas. [613]
The policy of treating some chiefs as senior to others has been [622]
abandoned and each of the seventy-eight recognized rulers
([illegible]) is eligible for election as a chief's representative on his [646]
local Rural Council. Village headmen (two from each chiefdom)
and the ordinary commoners are similarly chosen. The five Rural
Councils in turn elect one man of each sort to the District Council.[†]
The system allows for, and seems to have achieved, a combination [554]
of men with traditionally high status and those who are conspicuous
by reason of their education or success as coffee or rice
farmers. The old feeling that education was not necessary to a
chief's son, though it might be useful to a poor man, has vanished,
and a considerable number of the educated leaders of the district
are sons or grandsons of chiefs. The elected president of the
District Council, Mr. Gordon Mwansasu (188) is of the Nyakyusa
chiefs' lineage, though not of the most senior line. In the Rural
Councils the presidents elected have all, with one exception, been
ruling chiefs, but it is not necessarily the genealogically senior
who is chosen. There is scope for selection on the grounds of [555]
character and ability.

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[*] Five in the populous plain, [illegible] ([illegible]).

[†] cf. Z. E. Kingdon, 'The Initiation of a System of Local Government by African Rural Councils in Rungwe District of Tanganyika', *Journal of African Administration*, vol. iii, 4 (1951).

[77] [643] [648] The office of chieftainship still carries high prestige and the District Council has actually resolved to select a paramount chief. Competition for this position is fierce and it remains to be seen whether the Council will ever agree on a nomination. The persistent suggestion that the Administration should undertake the invidious task and select a paramount is scarcely likely to be acted upon, since the Administration sees no necessity for establishing such an office.

Chiefs, assisted by their village headmen, are the executive officers of the Rural Councils, but they have lost their judicial functions. There are twenty-four recognized courts with a bench of 'courtholders' appointed annually by the Rural Councils, and [692] [648] one superior court, but the annual appointment ceased in 1956 and more permanent appointments were made. The aim is to develop a specialized judiciary independent of the executive. There is also a very important class of full-time civil servants, secretaries of the District and Rural Councils, and clerks of the courts.

[672] The position of village headman is in a fluid state. Where the 'coming out' ritual has been dropped, the traditional occasion for the formal appointment of village headmen no longer arises, and old men continue in office much longer than before. When a headman dies his heir sometimes takes his position or, if neither the heir nor a junior son will accept it, some other man is appointed by the chief. There is evidence that in many chiefdoms men are reluctant to undertake the position, which carries no salary but involves a considerable amount of work and makes it difficult or impossible for a man to engage in paid employment either within or outside the District. As one woman put it, 'Money has killed the office of village headman' (*Indalama zigogile ubufumu*). There is some evidence from the lake-shore plain, however, of men competing for the office, and indeed of a son claiming in the courts the headmanship his father held. Possibly the competition for land on the plain, and the fact that the allocation of land lies with the village headman, account for this. When all the arable land is taken up, it is probable that acquisition will be [672] [423] through inheritance or sale only, and the present headman's power to allocate land is likely to vanish; but one of the most important assets of a village is its pasture-land, and in controlling and developing this the headman may well play a decisive part in the future. Since village headmen are essential executive officers in local administration, and are integrated into the new system of

Councils, the importance of establishing machinery for their appointment in chiefdoms where the 'coming out' is no longer held is obvious. [77] [622] [623]

The traditional communal rituals have not been dropped altogether, but their celebration is sporadic and not everyone supports them. Careful enquiries suggest that in less than half of the chiefdoms has the 'coming out' been celebrated when it was due. In the most conservative portion of the district, Selya, there were celebrations in 1952 and 1954, but even in that area a number of the ruling chiefs have never 'come out'. The omission is due partly to the desire of the old men to retain office, partly to the increase in population and the planting of coffee which makes any new deal in land unacceptable, and partly to the feeling of many that the old ritual is an anachronism, if not directly incompatible with their new faith in Christianity. Some chiefs who have not 'come out' would welcome a celebration; one such told us that 'if the "coming out" died chieftainship would die'; but a young chief's personal wishes are not decisive in this matter. Sacrifices at the groves of chiefs and heroes are not as frequent as before, but they still occur at some groves in time of drought or other emergency. The Kings came to Lubaga in 1954, and they were expected to come and install Kasitile's heir in 1955. In 1954 also there were sacrifices to Mwaijonga (80) and [illegible] (91) for it was a season of scarcity. Rituals for cleansing the country and sprinkling the homesteads occur sporadically 'when occasion demands', but not annually in any chiefdom and never in some. And when celebrations do occur they do not unite the people of a chiefdom as they used to do. Christians oppose them and many non-Christians are also sceptical. [561] [776] [661] [782] [789] [771]

In 1935 the traditional rituals celebrated by lineages and chiefdoms formed a coherent system. They were directed towards the shades and the heroes, as was manifest in the sacrifices and in the dreams of death and rebirth which those included 'fought with the shades' or were 'caught hold of' by Kyala.[1] The older participants were then conscious, in greater or lesser degree, of the symbolism implicit in the actions they performed. By 1955 the ritual cycle was nowhere celebrated in full; what remained were 'bits and pieces' of ritual, none of them fully intelligible without reference to the complete cycle. The link between the rites and the shades and the heroes was less clear, and the symbolism less [760] [778]

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[1] *Vide supra*, pp. [illegible]; *Rituals of Kinship*, pp. [illegible].

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CHAPTER XIV

RELIGION AND SOCIAL STRUCTURE

In this chapter we shall seek to show how the traditional com-
182. munal rituals both reflect and maintain the traditional political
structure, and to consider in what measure the change from
paganism to Christianity compels a change in other aspects of the
society, or, alternatively, how far the economic and political
changes taking place among the Nyakyusa compel a change in
religion.

The heroic myths are the charter for chieftainship. The heroes
182 from whom the chiefs are descended are pictured as creators and
773 benefactors, the authors of fertility and civilized living. But myth
and ritual also entrench the rights of commoners and unify people
769 of different stocks by asserting their complementary diversity.
● 643 No ritual can be celebrated without the participation of commoner
priests. They 'speak out' at rituals and bring public opinion
directly to bear on the chief, whose own health is held to depend
upon their goodwill; at the same time the whole country looks
to the chief as the source of fertility in man and beast and field.

Ritual was the integrating force with the widest range in the
182 traditional society. Independent chiefs, even those whose people
643 were culturally as different as the Nyakyusa and Kinga, joined in
sacrifice to Lwembe and Kyala and were mystically dependent
796 upon one another. As Kasitile put it 'the Kinga come (to Lubaga)
782 both when there is trouble in our land and in theirs'. In Ngonde
the 'divine king', the Kyungu, who controlled a flourishing trade
in ivory, developed secular as well as ritual functions and emerged
as a paramount chief, but in the Nyakyusa valley the ritual bond
had no secular backing save the exchange of iron and salt for
food, which linked Kinga and Nyakyusa in a tenuous partnership.
The sacrifices to the Lwembe did not exclude war between chiefs
who acknowledged him, nor did sacrifice to their common
ancestor exclude war between Mwaipopo (116) and Mwaihojo
(147), but the necessity of co-operation in sacrifice compelled
later reconciliation. Perhaps the insistence on the sacredness of
the heroes and their living representatives, the elaborate ritual of

[p. 216]

chieftainship, and the dependence upon medicines as a means 162
of enforcing law were connected with the ineffectiveness of secular
authority. Certainly the Kyungu's emergence from seclusion, and 613
the dropping of the taboos which surrounded him were connected 782
with his acquisition of economic power; but we know too little 796
of the conditions that make for elaboration of ritual to postulate
any general connexion between the absence of ritual in public
life and the effectiveness of secular authority.

The cycle of sacrifices to the heroes and dead chiefs among the 162
Nyakyusa is more than an ancestor cult, for it includes non- 769
relatives among its priests and beneficiaries; but it has many of the
features of an ancestor cult, among them the identification of piety
with conservatism. A good man follows exactly in the footsteps
of his father who becomes his god. This is reconciled with a myth
of a new beginning, ten generations ago, when civilized life came [773]
to the Nyakyusa valley, and the new beginning is celebrated each
generation with the 'coming out' of the young chief and his
contemporaries.

All Nyakyusa rituals are cathartic in the sense that they make 162
explicit and seek to dissipate, by their very expression and 783
rejection, certain anti-social tendencies. In the Nyakyusa view 796
the root of evil is 'anger in the heart' unadmitted and corrosive, 631
and only by an open confession can it be overcome.[1] Hence in
every situation of misfortune, public or private, men are pressed
to 'speak out' (ukusesya) and admit their anger. At the 'coming
out' the conflict of generations is expressed in the prolonged
debate over the date of the celebration and the detailed arrangements, and in the dancing and slaughter of cattle, and is finally
resolved when authority and land are handed over to the young
men by their fathers. The fissiparous tendencies of a chiefdom are
made explicit and canalized in constitutional form by the division
of the old chief's country into two, under his senior sons; and
criticism of the young chiefs is made explicit in the formal admonition by the father's village headmen. The rejection of conflict
is clearest at the annual purification when men throw out the
ashes contaminated by family bickering and the cannibalism of
witches, and *fight* one another 'that the homesteads may be peaceful'. This fighting is 'to bring out war from within (ukusesya)'.

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[1] cf. Good Company, pp. 99–110. The belief that a witch or sorcerer must confess if the patient was to recover was the reason for the torture of witches in many African societies.

[illegible] and is therefore to be interpreted as 'confession of anger', rather than as 'rebellion'.

776
631 Sometimes there is an expression of opposite tendencies, both implicitly approved. The sacrifices to the heroes and at the graves of the chiefs emphasize seniority and precedence, and
792 express the dependence of junior on senior kinsmen, but the
769 myth, recalled in every celebration, tells of the surpassing power
783 of the son or younger brother in the beginning of time, and the
591 junior brother of a chief often holds office as a priest. Then there is the drama of driving away the chief and bringing him back transformed, which is so characteristic of the rituals of kinship and appears again at the cleansing of the country. Such contradictions are doubtless expressions of ambivalent attitudes among the participants themselves, and of the attempt in ritual to reconcile conflicting social principles—in these instances authority with the rights and duties of juniors, and change with continuity.

In a society without written records legal certainty depends
792 very largely on publicity. This is apparent in the law relating to
643 marriage contracts and family inheritance,[1] and still more so in
561 the law of the chiefdom. The ritual of 'coming out' celebrates radical changes in social status, and the public recognition of the leaders, members, and territorial boundaries of villages, as well as of the heirs to chieftainship. Thus certainty in these matters is assured. There is no positive value of the coregency of father and son (as in ancient Egypt),[2] but the installation of the young chiefs before the death of their father serves to mitigate conflicts over the succession. Confusion over village boundaries and village
[423] leadership often appears when the ritual has not been celebrated, for there is no public definition to refer to.

How close is the link between religious belief and practice and
792 social structure? There is no doubt that the sacrifices to the dead
769 chiefs and heroes and the traditional rituals of kinship supported
797 the former political and kinship structure of the Nyakyusa. Their performance compelled co-operation between kinsmen,[3] between neighbouring chiefs, and between chiefs and people. How far then does the change in religion, begun when the first Christian convert professed his new faith, compel a change in the social

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[1] Godfrey Wilson, 'An Introduction to Nyakyusa Law', *Africa*, vol. x, 1937, p. [illegible].

[2] H. Frankfort, *Kingship and the Gods*, pp. [illegible].

[3] cf. *Rituals of Kinship*, pp. [illegible].

villages grew ever smaller and became extinct as their members gradually died off in old age.

A Nyakyusa village, then, owed its being to the most significant political, social and religious event. Each village had its own approximately democratic [illegible], and each headman was ritually and magically strengthened in order to lead and protect his men and their families.

This particular system operated satisfactorily in the demographic and land-using conditions of the old days. By the process of bifurcation, briefly described above, new chiefdoms and new villages were formed for each generation. Although the population appears to have been increasing rapidly there was always sufficient land to create two chiefdoms where one had existed before, and to create new villages and more villages than had existed before in the old chiefdom. The two new chiefs were able easily to move apart and find sufficient and more than sufficient land for their needs.

The system of bifurcation, the ideal of the Nyakyusa, did not always work out so neatly in practice — at any rate it often did not in the Lake Plains. Sometimes it did work; for example, the present chiefdoms of [illegible] and [illegible] are the two parts of their grandfather's single chiefdom, which split up under their respective fathers. Similarly, the present [illegible] and [illegible] chiefdoms descended from a single unit, whilst the [illegible] chiefdom itself today is really two indigenous chiefdoms, but the Government would recognise only the senior brother's claim to chiefship and allowed him authority over the whole. Even where a single new chiefdom succeeded the old (frequently as the result of civil war in which one brother extinguished the other) the essential dichotomous arrangement persisted so that the resultant single unit had two distinct halves, each with its own head with his villages and headmen. In any case, whether traditional bifurcation occurred or not, and right down to modern times, new villages have been established at the time of the "coming-out" of the new chief. The basic village system showed greater persistence and remained truer to type than did the chiefdom and the wider political system.

The real authority of a Nyakyusa chief was not in general very great, although individuals here and there achieved personal importance. A chief was accorded a great deal of prestige and honour, and by tribute and gifts he frequently became pre-eminently wealthy. He was supposed to be kept informed by his headmen of all important village affairs and to approve all matters concerning the land, but the village headman was in fact the real land authority, who attended to the details of land allocation and land use within his village. A chief could not do this, and in fact only in so far as he had the support and loyalty of his headmen had he any authority at all. "A chief is a chief because he has headmen," one informant put it to me — he was a prominent chief himself. A villager said: "A chief does not own the chiefdom, or the land. We, the people together, own it." A chief could, without notice or advice, take any unoccupied land for the use of himself or of his kinsmen, but he could not allocate it to others; both headmen and villagers would have indignantly and successfully protested had he tried, as some occasionally did. Land disputes, an uncommon feature in a country where land was plentiful, were settled by the headmen of the village in question; they were the private affairs of the village and the chief had no right of interference. Inter-village disputes first came before a meeting of the headmen concerned, with perhaps the assistance of the senior headman of the chiefdom. Only if a dispute could not be settled and if it seemed likely to threaten general peace within the chiefdom would the disputants go before the chief himself, who even so relied and had to rely heavily on his headmen to secure a settlement. So delicate was his position that he might be unable to resolve inter-village disputes for fear of withdrawal reprisals against him by the unsuccessful party.

[illegible]

Traditional Land Tenure

[illegible]

403 the same way as bananas, to be allocated along with the vacant surrounding land, although sometimes it seems that a chief might successfully lay claim to them. Trees supplying firewood were generally plentiful in the surrounding bushland. A man would not cut wood on another's holding, and standing trees merely went with the land if it was taken up by anyone else, in the same way as useful stands of thatching grass did.

In conclusion of this summary account the following points may be reiterated as important to the understanding of the traditional system:—

(i) Land was plentiful in relation to the people's needs and extensive areas were left uncultivated.

(ii) Land was owned by the village as a group, acting under its own headman, who was the arbiter and the allocator of fields.

[51] (iii) Land was held in usufructuary right only by a resident member of the village, and every resident had the right to a house and banana-grove site, to sufficient arable land and to the use of communal pastures and woodland.

(iv) The individual's security of tenure was good, in so far as this was thought at all important.

[413] (v) The power of the chief was slight in land matters; he had no authority to allocate land.

(vi) Other villages, whether of the same chiefdom or not, had no claim in, or authority over, a village's land and land affairs.

plots of maize, cassava, tobacco, etc., and useful trees (bamboo, citrus, mango, kapok, eucalyptus and firewood). Artificial drainage would, of course, make more land available along the rivers, but this is in general beyond the abilities and resources of the Nyakyusa without considerable outside assistance.

Finally, in this matter it is to be remembered that in addition to a man's arable holding, each of his wives has a banana plot at her house from which she obtains her staple foodstuff. Such plots amount to perhaps about a tenth of an acre on the average. On the other hand, the Nyakyusa are no longer prepared to tolerate a predominantly banana diet. Rice has, in most areas of the Lake Plains, become almost as important as bananas.

Large-sized Holdings

Some blame for this acute shortage of land and the smallness of the average holding has often been laid upon that minority of Nyakyusa who have exceptionally large holdings, and also upon the immigrants from beyond the Lake Plains who have come to settle there during the past decade.

The occupiers of large-sized holdings are rather fewer than has sometimes been supposed. The notoriety of large land-owners, such as some of the modern chiefs with as much as 25-30 acres, has brought more attention to them than is really warranted. Most chiefs and village headmen have arable holdings of above average size, as a result of their privileged positions in the land allocation system and because of their prestige influence; but they remain a small minority and their number is bound to decrease in the future as inheritance causes sub-division of their holdings, for most of them have also more than the average number of wives and sons. In the two high-density regions it is clearly impossible for any man much to increase his present holding. As will be shown later (see page 29) the modern trend is not unnaturally towards a dangerous fragmentation of holdings.

The data obtained in this matter for my eight village samples are summarized in Table III, page 13. In these villages the two men out of 272 who held more than ten acres were a village headman and the father of a chief.[7] There were seven other headmen and one chief as well as some other locally influential men amongst the people covered by my surveys, but none of them held more than ten acres. There are, of course, some commoners amongst the large land-holders; many of them are close relatives of the chief or headman and have thus received preferential treatment. Some, however, are ordinary villagers who were perspicacious enough to see future trends and to obtain land in the early days before most men realized its new value and when vacant areas were still easily available. Such men are tending to become a new, wealthy class, but on the other hand they are particularly susceptible to the begging of kinsmen and friends who have insufficient land. If they are not to be regarded as unneighbourly or even anti-social (perhaps practising witchcraft) they are virtually compelled to be generous sometimes, both with their land and with their profits.

On the whole this minority of men excites little attention or jealousy among the Nyakyusa, who indeed take it for granted that their chiefs and headmen will have more land than ordinary villagers, as befits their status and prestige. If it be thought that by reducing somehow the size and number of these unusually large holdings then the land shortage might be partly relieved, it is a false hope. I scarcely think that the Nyakyusa would welcome any such attempt at interference by administrative action, but in any case it would only provide minor and temporary relief here and there and would not be worth the excessive difficulties involved.

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[7] [illegible]

The Position of Immigrant Land-holders

Similar treatment has also been given to immigrants, but their numbers are relatively small and only significant locally. Since about 1948, or a little earlier, there has been an inflow of followers into the Lake Plains: - Nyakyusa from the Highlands (chiefly from the Central Region - Selya), Ndali from the Ndali Highlands of Rungwe District and Kinga from the Njombe District to the east beyond the Livingstones; from northern Nyasaland have come Ndali, Lambia and Sukwa, and there are also small numbers of Bemba and others from Northern Rhodesia. They have been attracted in the modern era, when land movement is easier, by the possibility of obtaining land in the northern Lake Plains, where rainfall is so high and a comfortable livelihood has been available.*

These immigrants have been and continue to be almost entirely restricted to the north in the "low-density region" (see map facing page 13). This constituted the outstandingly empty area of the country and still there remain vacant lands to be taken up. Such land is usually of relatively inferior quality, easily subject to erosion and loss of fertility on the slopes of the foothills and unsuitable for paddy cultivation except in small, isolated basins. The immigrants, that is, have settled in areas rejected by most Nyakyusa. There, locally, the newcomers outnumber the indigenous population. In the flood plains, the high-density regions, the proportions of foreigners cannot be more than one or two per cent. of the population, and in most villages there are none at all.

It is true that these newcomers do occupy land which might well be used to relieve the congestion nearer to the Lake; but in practice this would not be at all easy. To take a single example: the newly opened area in the north of the chiefdom of Mwakyusa between the Kiwira and Songwe rivers is being rapidly taken up by Ndali from the north-west, Nyamwanga and Nyakyusa from the Central Region (in that order of numerical importance). A few miles to the south, in the centre of the same chiefdom, the inhabitants of the Ikolo area consistently refuse to move although they manifestly cannot meet their land needs within their present villages. They, and others like them, say with some truth that paddy cultivation is not easy and less profitable in these newer and higher areas, and that poor communications make the disposal of produce more difficult. They also say, but more often leave to inference, that they are unwilling to leave their traditional village areas and begin in new parts, even though the move required is only one of a few miles. They have not yet become sufficiently aware of the permanent gravity of modern land shortage to overcome their parochial inertia. By the time they do become aware of it the opportunity may well be lost, for immigrants continue to arrive in twos and threes, and the last vacant land may be taken. To date, however, some vacant lands remain, albeit of poor quality, into which the densely packed Nyakyusa could move, and the immigrants cannot be blamed, at least not yet, for preventing the expansion and resettlement of the local population.

At the moment the chiefs and headmen in these northerly areas are keen to obtain as many of these immigrants as possible in order to swell the number of their subjects, the size of their villages and thus, directly, their own prestige and importance. Newcomers have every opportunity to be allocated as much land as they wish, where they wish, and many are liberally assisted with food in the traditional way until they harvest their first crop. I heard no complaints from either the local Nyakyusa or the immigrants, and relations seemed to be good. Strangers must conform to Nyakyusa ways of life and to the authority of the headmen and chief, although in fact they usually settle on the common East African pattern of scattered homesteads, each in its paddy area, and not in the tight Nyakyusa village pattern.

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* [illegible]

I think that the headmen and chiefs concerned would not welcome a restriction on immigration, for it offers them a chance to reinforce the customarily profitable prestige of their followers in the flood plains, to whom at the moment they feel inferior. They would, of course, most probably prefer indigenous Nyakyusa, could the latter be persuaded to settle there. As it is, at least some of the Nyakyusa of these northerly villages are trying to move into the flood plains, where they can more easily cultivate paddy and where they can join in a more active and ebullient village life.

One type of foreigner to the Lake Plains is the man (almost invariably a Nyakyusa from the Highlands) who has obtained land but does not settle on it nor in any village. He continues to live in his upland village and comes down to the plains only to cultivate and harvest his paddy field. This is strictly against Nyakyusa land law and custom and, in fact, such an absentee land-holder has often made a substantial monetary gift to the chief or headman for the protection of this extra-legal privilege. These strangers are frequently among the more wealthy upland Nyakyusa, who can afford such payments or fees, and often they are of chiefly rank themselves, perhaps having kinship ties with the local chief. There are probably no chiefdoms where such strangers have not obtained paddy fields, though naturally those which contained a good deal of vacant, arable paddy land at the beginning of the rice-cropping era have more. 423 471

This does arouse a certain amount of ill-feeling and opposition amongst local villagers who have insufficient land themselves, for they lose land and gain no numerical strength or profit of any kind. The illegal action of the local chief is also condemned, especially as the chiefs should not in any case assume allocatory powers. On the other hand it must be noted that the commoners philosophically accept the supposedly protected prerogatives of their chiefs under European rule and they expect the chiefs to take advantage of them. As with the case of the minority of large land-holders, the actual effect is not particularly great and reformation here would be a minor palliative. Nevertheless in this matter there is a definite and unpopular infringement of villagers' rights and of the local customary law.

One other group of strangers may be noted for the sake of completeness. That is the Kisi, who have for at least two generations been settling along the lake shore itself from Mwaya in the east to the Songwe river (and beyond) in the south-west. They have come from the north-eastern shores of the lake and in the Nyakyusa area they are principally fishermen who do not, therefore, compete with the indigenous population economically. They cultivate only tiny plots of cassava and sometimes of finger millet, although a few of the younger generation are now trying to grow a little paddy also. The total number of Kisi involved cannot be more than a few hundred and they have probably not increased much over the past decades. They follow an almost separate existence from their Nyakyusa neighbours, not intermarrying, and following their own way of life.[1]

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[1] [illegible]

sure of such reserved land elsewhere. Such land is cultivated in the meantime on a kind of year-to-year lease by one or more of the villagers as allowed by the headman.

Even when no vacant plots exist a headman will still accept newcomers. If they are young men they must be prepared to go landless for the time being (i.e., to remain dependent on their father's fields elsewhere) until such time as land becomes vacant. If the newcomer is an older man, then the headman will try to persuade one or more of his villagers to give up portions of their holdings and he will often cede part of his own land. The newcomer is therefore often allocated small strips and plots here and there in the village arable area and he thereafter joins the land-hungry, second seeking to expand their holdings. In one village in which I worked where land shortage was critical ([illegible], [illegible]'s chiefdom), there was not a single patch of arable land unworked, yet here the headman had, with full village approval, accepted three newcomers during the first nine months of 1955. Two of these were young men, one unmarried, and they could not expect to obtain land for some time except for a small banana plot. The third newcomer was a middle-aged man from a village some 15 miles away in another chiefdom. The headman had given him a half-acre plot out of his own paddy field and was laboriously begging pieces of land here and there from his people in order to make up a new holding of perhaps an acre. The headman himself had only about three and a half acres of arable land, he had at least one adult son who had not yet acquired an arable plot and he had other sons and brothers' sons owning only small fields. Yet he favoured the stranger, this newcomer. He was quite firm in his resolution to accept other newcomers in the future and in this he believed that he was acting as a good headman should. As far as I could learn he was supported by his villagers.

This is not, by any means, an isolated or even unusual phenomenon. It is, I feel, important to bear in mind this illustration of contemporary affairs. Firstly, because it shows another way in which holdings are fragmented and dispersed; and secondly, because it demonstrates how, so far, the Nyakyusa have refused to face the situation of land shortage, and how they continue to follow traditional practices and values associated with village prestige. These people complain of their inability to obtain sufficient arable land, but they are not yet prepared to make the mental and social adjustments which might at least partly relieve their own predicament. On the other hand, they themselves understand the need for newcomers and perhaps they are right in their implied insistence not to discard their cultural ideals. Their insistence on accepting newcomers and their willingness (however dimly perceived and expressed) to share their land with the landless are not discreditable attitudes, even if they are economically untenable.

Security of Tenure and Disputes over Land

As already noted, under traditional land tenure a Nyakyusa had good security in his holding so long as he continued to live in the same village. The only alteration of tenure occurred at the "coming-out" ceremony of a new chief when the older men would, if required, move aside in order to give their sons' generation the best land. This did not invariably happen in any case. Fundamentally, however, security of tenure is not a matter of prime importance to a people who have plenty of land, and land which is more or less of the same quality. Indeed, convenience of location in respect of one's own homestead was almost the only value land had as such. Occasionally a more dominant chief might try to seize a commoner's field to allow of his own expanded cultivation; it was quite unusual for him to succeed, and even if he did the dispossessed villager suffered little real deprivation, for he could easily obtain another field fairly near at hand.

311 423 [183] [164]

Security of tenure has continued into European times, and although perhaps weakened slightly in one way through the exaggerated powers which accrue to modern Government-supported chiefs, it has been strengthened by the modern peace and rule of law and the more efficient system of justice provided by the established local courts. According to G. Wilson (Wilson, G., 1938, p. 32) the increase in the movement of individuals between villages in earlier European times (i.e., up to about 1940-45) directly caused a lack of attachment to individual plots, and thus security of tenure was not considered particularly important.

[622] [illegible]

[19] [223] [622] [164]

The new situation of land shortage does not affect the basic position, or rather, by producing a high scarcity value on land, it has brought about an intensification of individuals' rights over their holdings. No longer dare a chief or headman attempt to commit such illegal acts as the seizure of a villager's field, so long as that villager is not afraid to publicise the affair. A man is not, and cannot afford to be, prepared to lose his field, for he cannot replace it with any certainty, either in a convenient location or elsewhere. A headman may sometimes bring strong pressure to bear on some of the men of his village to try to persuade them to give up portions of their land to assist a newcomer or a landless neighbour, but a villager can and does refuse and there is no legal authority which can override him here. As the land shortage becomes more obvious and more acute so men become less willing to allow their holdings to be touched for any reason, by anyone. The re-allocation at a "coming-out" ceremony appears to have been dropped nowadays[1] and thus a man holds his land undisturbed until his death, when it passes by inheritance to his sons. There are cases now where grandsons of the original holder occupy land through undisturbed and undisputed inheritance. A man can, as he wishes, loan a kinsman or friend a plot in his holding, or he can make an outright gift. The principal restriction which remains is that a man must continue to live in the village in order to retain these rights; he must relinquish them if he permanently goes to live elsewhere. Nevertheless, the land of a well-established villager would be kept for him pending his hopeful return, for if he has left in umbrage and fear because of suspected witchcraft, then he may be persuaded to come back after a time. The headman and his neighbours should in fact persist in their attempts to persuade him, even to the use of force, for this is not only a moral duty of age-mates and fellow-villagers but is also an effort to remove the imputations of their alleged witchcraft and anti-social conduct.

Once, therefore, a man obtains land he has absolute rights in it during his continued residence in the village. Especially today, older men seldom shift their homes and almost all land is now held on a tenure which will be passed on by inheritance.

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Boundary disputes are few. Usually, and increasingly, village boundaries are well known, and field boundaries invariably are. During my field measurements in the sample villages, I never met any difficulty with my local team in quickly establishing the ownership and exact limits of any plot. Boundaries are usually marked by small ridges of accumulated debris or by narrow paths, and these form an intricate and irregular network throughout a village's arable area. They are so well known that there is very little scope for a greedy man to attempt to encroach on a neighbour's holding at hoeing time. If minor disagreements do arise at that season they can be immediately settled – by appeal to neighbours working nearby if necessary – and the headman or his assistant may well not be called in at all. [629]

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[1] [illegible]

well covered with vegetation and with so reliable and plentiful a rainfall, yet, of course, the actual pasturage available is very considerably less as so much of the land is taken for arable and building purposes. There is in practice a most acute shortage of grazing land everywhere, except in certain parts of the north-west Highlands (Ukukwe). This shortage is most critical during the wet season, for at other times of the year the herds are able to graze over the arable fields, where herbage grows exceptionally rapidly after harvest as a result of the high rainfall.

Traditionally, each village had a roughly demarcated area of common pasturage which was not, and could not be, used for arable purposes. With the increased demand for arable land, this commonage has almost everywhere in the Lake Plains been gradually whittled away for permanent arable holdings. Headmen who control these pastures, and many of their chiefs too, are much worried about this process, about the break with tradition and the modern pastoral difficulties; but arable needs are given priority over grazing and the practice continues. In the flood plains, the higher-density regions, common pasturage has by now almost disappeared altogether. The little which remains is largely unsuitable for cultivation, consisting of laterite or badly drained areas – often the sandy, coastal strips covered with dense thicket and tall sedges which provide very little useful grazing. During the dry season, after the paddy harvest, the situation is fair, but during the cultivation season pasturage is entirely inadequate, and in addition the cattle are compelled to live and graze in extremely arduous conditions of standing water, mud, mosquitoes and flies. They do not obtain enough food then and they lose condition badly. There are many deaths from exhaustion, near-starvation and disease, and this affects the immature stock particularly. Only by continuous tenacity on the part of both men and boys can the herds be retained at all. There is no tradition of stall-feeding and so far the Nyakyusa have refused to adopt this measure of alleviation.

Yet, as the Nyakyusa are quick to point out, each family has only a few cattle. Most families have a cow or two, and the average is only about two to three head per family – cf. Table VI, page 30. Owners of large herds are relatively few, and herds of more than ten cattle in a single family are very uncommon. Although the cattle population is too great for the pasture resources now available, yet the animals are fairly evenly and thinly distributed amongst the dense human population. Goats and sheep are few – almost nil altogether – in the Lake Plains and of no significance. It is important to note that here we do not have a situation of large herds which might be reduced by some form of culling.

Cattle are held in high esteem by all Nyakyusa as a source of valued milk for the daily diet, as the means to marriage (in bridewealth), as a store of capital, as a symbol of prestige and as an essential element in important ceremonial activity. This kind of value system needs no emphasis here as it is common to much of Eastern Africa, but it may be noted that one of the principal uses of the large sums of money saved from wages in mining employment (labour migration)* and from the profits of cash-cropping at home is in the purchase of cattle. It is thought that money is best invested, saved and used in this way, once immediate material needs have been met.

Even with the high proportion of deaths from disease and the appalling conditions of the wet season, there are indications that the numbers of cattle are not decreasing and there may well be local increases. Apart from natural increase, there is fairly heavy buying from the Ndali people to the north-west in Rungwe District, and also from further afield in Northern Nyasaland, and in Nyamwanga and Fipa tribal areas (Abercorn District).

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* [illegible]

of the father. The old principle that every man had the right to arable land applied no less strongly to the young men, married or bachelors. Today most headmen will refuse to entertain the applications of young bachelors for land, and in this they merely represent general public opinion. But many young husbands likewise cannot obtain land, or only an insufficient amount.

Consequently, the following case-history, which I recorded for one young man, is not unusual. In [illegible] he lived in the [illegible] young-men's hamlet, attached to [illegible] village in [illegible]'s chiefdom, where his father lives. He was about [illegible] years old and had a wife and one child. Twice he had been to work in the mines and from the profits of this employment he had completed his bridewealth payment and had bought, in addition, three cattle, a bicycle and some good clothing. He thought he would probably go away again. Behind his house his wife had about 300 square yards of bananas and there was a tiny patch of cassava. This man had no other land, but he assisted in the heavy labour on his father's holding (about 1.7 acres in all) and by family convention he normally took for his own use the paddy crop of a small strip there; he insisted, however, that he had not been given this strip outright and that it remained at his father's pleasure. He had an unmarried half-brother about 22 years old who had not obtained even that concession at the time. Their father was about 55 years old and had two other sons who were still boys. The young man himself had been refused an allocation of land by the headman on the grounds that (as the headman well knew) he had the use of this strip of his father's land, and also because, as the eldest son, he would be the principal heir on his father's death. He was clearly worried about his future, for he did not wish to go abroad again and leave his wife and child; but he did not see how he could stay at home without seriously lowering his standard of living to little above subsistence level.

I quote this brief case-history not necessarily as typical – though I think it probably is – but as an actual illustration of the present state of affairs as they affect an individual.

The Modern "Chief" and the Land

Most of the traditional chiefs, *abanyafyale*, have been recognized and selected under the Native Authority, and they are officially referred to today as [illegible] ([illegible]). Some of the smaller chiefdoms have been absorbed administratively by their larger neighbours, and, although they are still recognized by the people, their *abanyafyale* have lost very much of their earlier prestige and authority. In the Lake Plains the modern chiefdoms are often rather larger than is usual amongst the Nyakyusa,[1] but they are, of course, small in comparison with the size of most African chiefdoms in Tanganyika.

The slightness of the traditional authority of the chief in land matters has already been noted (pages 7-8) and in general this still holds. In European times, however, the recognized chiefs have been given an increased authority and prestige as the local intermediaries between Government and people, and until recent years they were almost the only local instruments of the Government amongst the Nyakyusa. They have been backed by the all-powerful Europeans, who preferred to deal with single, recognized individuals thought to have prime authority in a locality, and the European officer has been encouraged in this notion by an over-enthusiastic policy of indirect rule. Such chiefs were able to assume a degree of power well beyond the traditional limits, and to aggrandize themselves thereby. The ordinary commoner was never quite sure how far his chief was individually claiming more than he had authority to claim, or have for the Central Government was permitting or even compelling him to use new powers. Part of this novel power has, not unnaturally, been used to take over land-control responsibilities to which the chief has no traditional tribal right, and it has led to the claims, sometimes heard in the Courts and upheld in the District Commissioner's Appeal Court, that chiefs are the sole, traditional and rightful land authorities. It has led to chiefs assuming, or trying to assume, land allocation and supervisory powers which hitherto were the clear right only of the village headmen. 643 [illegible]

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[1] [illegible]

Thus some chiefs have declared that they alone, or at least primarily, have allocatory powers over formerly uncultivated tracts which are relatively distant from the villages and which have now become valuable as paddy fields. Others have come to claim rights of interference in village land affairs, even within the long-established village areas. By the [illegible] threat of their alleged Government support, by taking advantage of new conditions, they have not infrequently "got away with it". They have insisted that their own nominees be allocated vacant holdings; they have gone over the heads of village headmen and made public their opinion as to who, amongst numbers of aspirants, should receive land in villages; they have insisted that headmen should consult them on the details of allocation. The desire for power and further prestige is one impulse behind this development. Sometimes the chiefs, better educated than many of their headmen, are able to understand the modern land situation better and are impatient of their headmen's conservatism and procrastination. Another factor is the potential profit which may accrue as land becomes scarce and thus a valuable commodity, and this became particularly important when the rush developed to take up the formerly vacant lands for paddy cultivation. Gifts in money and kind became common in return for preferential treatment for the donors. These lands are now all allocated and held by someone, but the chiefs have been reluctant to relinquish their new-found authority. [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

These remarks do not apply to all the chiefs: some have been notably content to use their influence through the traditional system by judicious co-operation with their headmen. Some, too, have been too unperceptive or feckless to take action at all. Again, some have been forestalled by strong village headmen who would not allow any diminution of their own status and rights. In some of the formerly vacant lands where no headman could reasonably claim traditional jurisdiction, the operations of the chiefs have probably been beneficial in reducing chaotic land-grabbing and jealous rivalry; now, however, these lands are brought under cultivation there seems to be a good case for their inclusion within the normal Nyakyusa land-control system. The continued existence of a supra-headman authority does not necessarily lead to stability or improved control. Certainly it is not in keeping with the people's values and institutions. [illegible]

For these changes Government must clearly bear some responsibility, and often also the blame for indirectly causing alterations in native land law and custom by some administrative attitude or ruling in a related sphere. There has been a good deal of well-intentioned insistence on determining and recognizing the "Land Authority" in tribal areas in the interests of stability and efficiency. In Rungwe District the facile claims of Nyakyusa chiefs have been, only too readily accepted without question. In fact the traditional smallish chief only represented his chiefdom as a unit, and his lack of real power corresponded to the lack of cohesion within the chiefdom. The notion of a supreme "Land Authority" is largely irrelevant for the Nyakyusa. In a theoretical sense we may perhaps say that the total land of a chiefdom was and is owned by all of the people in that chiefdom—chief, headmen and villagers; and therefore we may perhaps categorize the chief, the single individual representing the group as a whole, as the "land-owner." To [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]